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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE PANTAGES THEATRE IN EDMONTON, ALBERTA, 1913 TO 1921.

by

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A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This study of the Pantages Theatre in Edmonton will focus on the years 1913 to 1921; this period constitutes the heyday of Pantages circuit vaudeville in the exclusively-built Edmonton theatre. Beginning with a brief summary of the entertainment scene in Edmonton prior to 1913, this study will examine the significance of Pantages vaudeville entertainment in Edmonton's early years.

The study will encompass three aspects of the Pantages vaudeville expression: the mechanics and form of vaudeville, the nature of the Pantages circuit, and, most significantly, Pantages vaudeville as performed on the Edmonton stage. The specific types of entertainment favored by circuit owner Alexander Pantages, and the circuit's popularity in the North American theatrical context will be taken into consideration. Essentially, the study will examine vaudeville as a theatre art form, exemplifying the Edmonton Pantages experience.

In what the Edmonton Journal eloquently termed "The Most Northerly High Class Vaudeville Playhouse in North America", the architecturally elaborate Pantages Theatre provided the ideal setting for vaudeville. Included in this study is a discussion of the ornamental Italian Renaissance stylings of the theatre. Pantages' head architect, B. Marcus Priteca, made major contributions in the area of theatre design, and some of his innovations

were applied to the Edmonton Pantages Theatre.

The wit, glitter and spectacle of lively-paced vaudeville shows provided a tempo which denied the dinginess of the rapidly expanding boom-town. Vaudeville's reliance on direct sensory experience (ie. the lavish use of gesture, color, movement and sound), constituted a fluid form which could mold and shift in consideration of the current tastes and mores of its audiences. While Edmonton's Pantages was clearly designed to be an extravagant emporium of vaudeville entertainment, it was not built to provide an outlet for the amateur or professional talent in the city. Edmontonians looked to the larger American centres for entertainment; the erection of the Pantages stands in direct relationship to Edmonton's position as a rapidly expanding Canadian, yet North American city.

The study will conclude with a summary of the Pantages Theatre from 1921 until its demolition in 1979. From its function as a vaudeville palace in 1913 to 1921, through to its re-opening as the Strand cinema in 1931, the Pantages-Strand Theatre entertained three generations of Edmontonians in the grandest and most opulently ornamented theatre structure ever known to this city.

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CHAPTER ONE

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THEATRE IN EDMONTON BEFORE 1913

Within a one hundred year period, Edmonton progressed from a tiny fur trade outpost to a major North American centre. Accompanying this growth were theatrical developments similar to those experienced by any other Canadian or American city; yet Edmonton stands unique in that its history is telescoped into such a relatively short time span. In a mere three decades, Edmonton's entertainment scene evolved from the simplest amateur Fort entertainments to the most spectacular theatrical offerings as were decreed by the contemporary North American vogue.

Edmonton's earliest entertainment consisted of horseracing[1] and dances, both of which were undoubtedly accompanied by a good deal of drinking. As early as 1841, Edmonton House hosted a ball. Visitor Alexander Ross was impressed; "...the whole affair was conducted with much good taste and decorum."[2] It is likely that migrant trappers and adventure-seekers were a year-found source of entertainment at the isolated HBC outpost, reliving their adventures

[1] In what can be considered the first recorded account of organized entertainment in Edmonton, Duncan McGillivray defines horseracing as a popular pastime in 1795 at Edmonton House. A.S. Morton, ed. The Journal of Duncan McGillivray (Toronto: Macmillan, 1929), p. 28.

[2] Alexander Ross, Fur Hunters of the Far West (London: Smith, Elden & Co., 1855), p. 210.

and relating whatever news they had about the rest of the world beyond the Fort.

During the late 1870's and early 1880's, Edmonton was rapidly assuming the resemblance of a settlement. It follows that the variety of amusements grew with the increasing numbers and talents of the settlers. But Edmonton was still a tiny settlement (in 1878, 148 souls occupied the as yet un-incorporated town). Dr. Newton, a visitor who later became the resident preacher, describes the settlement in 1879:

> We have nothing like a town...there is the fort, then if you had a telescope and could look around the corner into a valley you would see a hotel. Then if there was no fog you could see the Methodist chapel and parsonage and scattered houses on that side; and on the other, All Saints English Church, a few Indian tents and again a few settlers' houses up the river. This is Edmonton proper.[3]

Frank Oliver, however, had enough faith and enthusiasm in Edmonton to start up a newspaper in 1880. Oliver arrived from Winnipeg with a second-hand miniature press,[4] and for several years the Edmonton Bulletin could boast as being "the smallest newspaper in the world."[5] The Bulletin faithfully ran reviews, most of which were anonymous, of amateur and professional entertainments.

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[3] J.G. MacGregor, Edmonton - A History (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1975), p. 85.

[4] Ibid., p. 91.

[5] This was the Edmonton Bulletin's advertising motto until the paper assumed a larger format in the early 1890's. Hereafter the Edmonton Bulletin is referred to as the Bulletin.

However, one can usually trace authorship to Oliver's wry and often sarcastic pen.

During the last two decades of the 1800's, travelling medicine shows frequented North American towns and settlements. Indeed, by 1890, 150 medicine shows were spread across the United States, and some infiltrated into Canada.[6] Dr. True entertained Edmontonians for over a decade, with his "...olio entertainment of painless tooth, corn and wart extraction, singing and story-telling...at the Alberta corner."[7] Although Dr. True was evidently appreciated by Edmontonians for his performances, the medicinal value of his peddled "cure-all" was suspect:

> Dr. True gave his last entertainment for a couple of weeks on Saturday evening last. He expects to leave about the 12th or 13th of June, by which time the effect of his numerous operations and of the mineral salts which he sells for purifying the blood and the cure for cattarrh, rheumatism, etc. will be more thoroughly known. He will open up for business for a few nights before leaving.[8]

The plaintive "coon songs", soft shoe dances, straw hats and banjos characteristic of minstrel shows constituted the most popular form of entertainment in Eastern Canada and the States from 1840 to 1880.[9] Edmonton was provided with a minstrel show in 1882, but not in the form of a travelling troupe such as the rest of North America enjoyed. Instead, the local detachment of the North West Mounted Police pooled their talents. This timely entertainment was offered during the February of a particularly cold winter, and the crowd that attended evidently enjoyed the respite from the weather. There was seating only for the ladies at the minstrel show, as three hundred had crammed into the Fort Saskatchewan police barracks, constituting "...the largest number yet seen at an affair of the kind in the country."[10]

---

[6] Bernard Sobel, A Pictorial History of Vaudeville (New York: Citadel Press, 1961), p. 28.

[7] Bulletin, May 25, 1893.

[8] Bulletin, May 29, 1893.

[9] Sobel, p. 30.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, Edmonton's small-town atmosphere changed to one of boom-town. Coinciding with the arrival of the first train in South Edmonton in 1891, the population jumped from 350 in 1887 to 1,670 by 1895. As Edmonton became less of a backwoods depot and grew more commercial in character so did the nature of entertainment experienced in the town. Indeed, "...by the end of the decade, twenty-seven professional performing groups would have come and gone, some two or three times...."[11] The Bulletin continued to announce concerts and "balls", but the announcements of the arrival of professional road companies assumed prominent positions in the newspaper, with flashy ads placed conspicuously amid the local news. Everything involving a road show's visit between opening and closing nights in Edmonton was viewed as "news" by the Bulletin; during the '90's, Edmonton eagerly welcomed professional entertainments.

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[10] Bulletin, February 11, 1882.

[11] James Sheremeta, A Survey of Professional Entertainment and Theatre in Edmonton, Alberta Before 1914 (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Alberta, Department of Drama, 1970), p. 24.

Although Edmonton had become increasingly recipient to more relatively sophisticated entertainments, a small-town attitude prevailed. A Bulletin report of the Fax Concert Company demonstrates where the priorities of the town were:

> The Fax Concert Company had an enthusiastic reception and their efforts to amuse the audience met with unstinted applause. The ladies were encored time and again, and Mrssrs. [sic] Fax's and Cameron's songs were, to quote an American contemporary, 'too funny for anything'. Full houses are the order of the day, and the accomplished pianist, Miss Martin, adds considerably to the attractions of an already favorite company. Last night's concert had just got underway when the toll of the fire bell was heard, the audience immediately left the hall and they never came back.[12]

However, the Fax Concert Company returned the following summer. The Bulletin reported that:

> ...this company is not the same which so delighted Edmonton last summer, the leading man is the same, and no doubt he has secured assistants as competent as those who accompanied him last year.[13]

In the spring of 1892, the Bulletin announced the upcoming arrival of Caroline Gage and Company of Players, this being the first professional theatrical company to visit Edmonton.

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[12] Bulletin, August 18, 1892.

[13] Bulletin, July 17, 1893.

"The appearance of the first theatrical troupe marks an era in the progress of civilization here...", proclaimed the Bulletin, "...and their enterprise should receive substantial recognition."[14] That they were to perform for four nights in Edmonton was, to the Bulletin, "...fair proof that they have something good." The ad boasted of "10 PEOPLE", "16 COMPLETE SETS OF SCENERY", "MAGNIFICENT WARDROBE", and "GORGEOUS STAGE SETTINGS." The "MATCHLESS" Caroline Gage Co. held over three extra days in Edmonton, charging $1.00 for seats in Strathcona's Field's Hall. The troupe presented Galatea (no author mentioned) to a packed house on their first night, and the next night the hall was equally full to see John Tobin's adaptation of Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew, titled The Honeymoon. The Bulletin encouraged local patronage in its review of Galatea:

> The performers could not complain of lack of appreciation on the part of the audience for many of the latter seemed likely to laugh themselves into hysterics at the comic passages of the play.[15]

The Caroline Gage Co. also presented Damon and Pythias by John Banion and Oliver Twist to mediocre houses. But Edmontonians turned out in droves to see Henry Byron's Our Boys and Our American Cousin by Tom Taylor, the latter being the play at which Lincoln was assassinated.[16]

[14] Bulletin, May 23, 1892.

[15] Bulletin, June 2, 1892.

[16] John Orrell, Fallen Empires:The Lost Theatres of Edmonton (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1981), p. 7.

Not until the next century was underway did Edmonton have a structure built and designed specifically for theatre. During the '90's, Robertson Hall accommodated the bulk of Edmonton's theatrical activity. Built by Sheriff Scott Robertson in 1892, it was located a half block east of 97 Street on Jasper Avenue. The first floor was occupied by two businesses, and the second storey, as the Bulletin attested,

> ...will supply a great need in Edmonton, as the town has never before had a hall such as is necessary for people to meet in comfortably for instruction, recreation or amusement.[17]

Robertson Hall was Edmonton's first entertainment centre, outfitted with a stage eighteen feet deep, bordered by two dressing rooms. A small gallery at the back of the second storey, capable of seating twenty patrons, gave the hall the resemblance of a theatre. The rest of the audience was ushered to the main floor which had rows of about three hundred removable chairs.[18] The success of the "Opera House", as Robertson Hall was often referred to, was apparent after a year, so plans were made to improve its facilities. The Bulletin announced the renovations:

> Robertson Hall is being improved by the construction of an arch over the stage, which will admit the arrangements of a curtain and scenery usual in a well-appointed theatre. The scenery and curtain have been received from Chicago, and are not excelled in style or taste in any city in Canada.[19]

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[17] Bulletin, September 15, 1892.

[18] Bulletin, September 15, 1892.

[19] Bulletin, February 19, 1893.

One of the first road shows to appear in the newly renovated Robertson Hall were comedians Allyn and Kelly. Although the populace may have been eager for professional entertainments, the acts which graced the new appointments of Robertson Hall were still subject to the caustic criticism of Frank Oliver in the Bulletin:

> The Allyn and Kelly concert of Thursday night had a smaller attendance than that of Wednesday and Wednesday did not equal Tuesday. This was not altogether due to the town being run out of funds. The trouble was that Allyn was no good and that Kelly was not up to specifications. In mentioning in the last issue that Mssrs. Allyn and Kelly were first class in their respectives lines the Bulletin neglected to state the exact lines in which these gentlemen were first class. Mr. Allyn's speciality appears to be the wearing of a plug hat and long coat when off the stage. His speciality on the stage has been carefully concealed from the Edmonton public.[20]

The North American craze for vaudeville had touched Edmonton by the mid 1890's. By then, Edmonton was visited by a handful of the same troupes that toured larger eastern and American centres. Among the most popular of the road shows to visit Edmonton was the Big Bonanza Co., an American speciality troupe featuring Minnie Marden, "The Little Georgian Wonder." The Big Bonanza Co. offered Edmonton audiences variety if nothing else; there were acts of strength, a song and dance team composed of children ("While they did wonderfully well and appeared to enjoy it", stated the Bulletin, "it seemed positively cruel to have such little children so employed."[21]), magic and mindreading acts, all

[20] Bulletin, March 30, 1893.

[21] Bulletin, August 10, 1893.

interspaced by piano renditions completed the bill of fare for the Edmonton run.[22]

Before the close of the nineteenth century, Edmonton was enjoying the benefits of immigration and the resulting increase in urbanization. The Klondike gold rush literally put Edmonton "on the map," and proved to be an economic shot in the arm for the growing town. Local businesses encouraged gold-seekers to travel to the fields via Edmonton, and the Bulletin reported on the influx into Dawson:

> Already the rush has commenced, and impatient miners and prospectors, local experts, wandering fortune seekers, and businesmen not waiting for the ice to leave the river have staked claims all along the bank from high to low mark, all seeking to secure a share of the precious metal whose very name is a magnet to attract the millions...[23]

The gold rush helped increase Edmonton's wealth as it did recognition, and thereby directly fostered the flow of professional entertainment into the town. Edmonton was seen by some as a viable "gateway to the north", and it follows that the city witnessed an abundance of visiting road companies after 1897.

During February of 1897, Edmonton actually had a surplus of concert companies. The Cosgrove Co. and the Hardie Ideals arrived in Edmonton at the same time, resulting in what the Bulletin termed an "inter-company war" over which troupe would perform in Robertson Hall. (Unfortunately, the Bulletin does not elaborate

[22] Bulletin, August 10, 1893.

[23] Bulletin, April 15, 1897.

on the nature of the "war"). The Cosgrove Co. emerged victorious while the Hardie Ideals performed on an impromptu stage in the fire hall. The Cosgrove Co. probably won the better space because of their promised "special effects", as accounted for by the Bulletin:

> Their program will consist of musical specialities, comic songs and Highland and butterfly dancing, the latter with calcium effects [lighting effects]. Also Kinetoscope exhibition [moving pictures], and a splendid attraction is advertised consisting of limelight views of Klondikers leaving Edmonton.[24]

The R.E. French Theatre Co. and the Orris Ober Co. were two other troupes to visit Edmonton in 1898. Typical of the other touring companies of the late '90's, a different play was featured each evening of the company's stay. While the R.E. French Co.'s plays were light operas, the Orris Ober Co. incorporated songs and fancy dancing between the acts of their featured play. Other companies which visited Edmonton with similar programs were the McPhee Co. (1899), The Clara Mathes Comedians (1899), and the Lyceum Co. (which in 1899 presented Othello, the first full-length Shakespeare play presented in Edmonton).[25]

Although Edmonton could not claim a consistent flow of professional entertainment prior to the erection of structures built exclusively for the use of theatre, the town certainly experienced a variety of amusements from the troupes that elected to visit. If one single factor characterized the professional

[24] Bulletin, February 17, 1898.

[25] Bulletin, July 24, 1899.

entertainment in Edmonton prior to 1913 it is variety: popular fare included concerts, lectures, plays and playlets, novelty acts with comedians, musicians, singers and dancers, and moving picture exhibitions. Edmonton reflected the current North American trend in popular entertainment, although the town may have been a few years behind in enjoying the latest vogue.

Nevertheless, Edmonton was consistent with the rest of North American in terms of the pattern of its theatrical development. Geographic, social and economic conditions affected any centre's entertainment, and Edmonton, not unlike any other budding North American city, experienced identifiable phases of contemporary theatrical entertainments. From amateur concerts to itinerent medicine show men and lecturers, to touring companies, Edmonton was ready to host international celebrities such as Sarah Bernhardt by 1913.[26] (See Appendix "A".) Larger centers to the east and the south frequently had the advantage of a half-century or more of urban development, and in the period from 1890 to the outbreak of the first World War, Edmonton's theatrical developments were somewhat condensed.[27] Edmonton contributed to the commercial theatre scene of North America in that it provided yet another drop-off point for what was by and large American entertainment, and frequently that which was second and third rate. However, the infiltration of eastern Canadian and American-based entertainments helped ensure

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[26] Bulletin, November 6, 1913.

[27] At incorporation in 1892, Edmonton's population was 700, by 1914 it had escalated to 72,500.

Edmonton's position as a rapidly expanding Canadian, yet North American city.

Along with Robertson Hall, the Thistle Arena accommodated theatrical presentations. From 1902 until its destruction by fire in 1913, the Arena occassionally hosted road shows. It is likely that small touring companies avoided the cavernous Thistle Arena in favour of the significantly smaller, and thus easier to fill Robertson Hall.

In July of 1907, Minnie Maddern Fisk and her company performed The New York Idea to a full house of one thousand. A significant percentage of Edmonton's populace[28] filled the Arena to see Mrs. Fisk, a prominent American actress and producer of social comedies.[29] Edmonton audiences of the time were either very patient or starved for entertainment, or both, as:

> ...It was broad daylight when the audience assembled in the rink and also when it emerged. There was a long delay in getting the scenery across the river valley from Strathcona and the curtain did not go up until hearly midnight. The performance was a most finished one in all respects.[30]

Edmonton's first vaudeville house was built in 1906, the same year that Robertson Hall was gutted by fire.[31] The Empire theatre was erected on what was then McDougall Avenue, the site being across the street from the present site of the Citadel Theatre. As seen in the Bulletin of June 21, 1906, the Empire offered "...Refined Vaudeville, Motion Pictures, Illustrated Songs. Four Shows Each Day...Each Performance One Hour and Twenty Minutes." Prices ranged from 10¢ to 25¢.

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[28] Based on the Henderson's Directory of 1908, Edmonton's population at that time was about 18,500.

[29] Arthur Hobson Quinn, A History of the American Drama From the Civil War to the Present Day (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1936), p. 63.

[30] Edmonton Journal, September 23, 1949.

[31] Orrell, p. 39.

Owner O.C. Ross apparently failed to establish his theatre as a part of any major vaudeville chain, so he booked acts himself for the Empire's opening.[32] Ross had attempted to put the Empire on the Sullivan-Considine circuit, but instead a rather motley array of entertainers occupied the stage in its first year of operation. (Meanwhile in Seattle, the Sullivan-Considine circuit had become the major competitor to Pantages vaudeville.) It would be a matter of only a few years before Edmonton would be supplied with a regular flow of professional curcuit-based vaudeville.

The years 1907 and 1908 saw both the erection and closure of theatres in Edmonton. The Edmonton Opera House and the Kevin (advertised as purveyors of "Polite Vaudeville") opened on Jasper and 103rd Street, but after only a month's worth of business the Kevin was destroyed by fire.[33] The cause of the fire remained undetermined but during the fire a tank used to store gas for the lights exploded, causing further damage.[34]

The Edmonton Opera House was probably not much of a

[32] Orrell, p. 37.

[33] Orrell, p. 52.

[34] Bulletin, July 22, 1907.

competitor to the Empire theatre, which in 1907 had changed its name to the Bijou and its bill of fare to the popular novelty--motion pictures.[35] (The Bijou, incidently, was Edmonton's first house dedicated to motion pictures). The management of the ill-fated Kevin built the Lyric,[36] and next door on 101 Street and Jasper the new Orpheum was erected, the ads for which proclaimed it as "the most up-to-date place of entertainment in the city."[37] The Lyric was short-lived as a vaudeville house; by the end of 1907 motion pictures steadily replaced live acts and in 1908 it permanently closed.[38]

Meanwhile, plans were afoot to resurrect the Kevin in the form of the Dominion theatre. The end product had a seating capacity of 390, and was "...redecorated throughout, and no money has been spared to obtain a pleasing effect."[39] Remembering the Kevin's destruction by fire, the builders supplied the new Dominion with improved fire exits. The Bulletin reported that this new theatre would:

> ...take the place in Edmonton which the Winnipeg theatre holds today in Winnipeg, the Lyric to Vancouver, the Lois [Pantages] to Seattle, and the Baker to Portland.[40]

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[35] Bulletin, May 4, 1907.

[36] Orrell, p. 54.

[37] Bulletin, September 23, 1907.

[38] Orrell, p. 55.

[39] Edmonton Journal, May 28, 1908. The Edmonton Journal began in Edmonton in 1903.

[40] Journal, May 28, 1908.

During the Dominion's short life span three stock companies performed four plays on its stage; the Jeanne Russell Company had success with Goethe's Faust there in August of 1909.[41] However, in January of the same year, fire again put a stop to all productions. Although the fire went unnoticed by most of the Dominion's patrons,[42] the incident closed the theatre until October of the same year. Upon the theatre's reopening, Dominion theatre ads in the Bulletin boasted of "Big Refined Vaudeville Shows", but by 1911 the Dominion was renamed the Majestic and the ads changed to "High Class Photoplays."

In January of 1908 the Grand opened, promising circuit shows that included Calgary, Regina and Moose Jaw; "...The very best vaudeville shows will be put on."[43] But by 1909 less expensive motion pictures constituted the theatre's main fare. The Grand became the Starland in 1910, then the Garland in the same year, then it was refurbished in 1911 for use as a movie house.[44]

By 1909 Edmonton had seven theatre spaces in various stages of operation. The Bijou and the Orpheum specialized in silent motion pictures interspaced with live acts. Opening as a vaudeville house in 1908, the Grand became a movie house by 1909. The Edmonton Opera House and the Dominion were stock companies, and the new

[41] Orrell, pp. 56-57.

[42] Bulletin, January 8, 1909.

[43] Journal, January 6, 1908.

[44] Orrell, p. 69.

Empire remained as the only vaudeville house. The Thistle Arena still accommodated the occasional large touring show. Before Strathcona (the area known today as South Edmonton) amalgamated with Edmonton in 1911, Strathcona had at least four spaces which were used for either live theatre or motion pictures.[45] As yet, there existed no exclusively designed theatre to provide a stopping off point for any one of the many thriving American-based vaudeville chains.

By 1910 most of the theatres in Edmonton turned from live theatre to motion pictures as their main bills of fare. Although the motion pictures of the period were often grainy and jerky, their popularity was well established, foreshadowing the eventual demise of vaudeville to the cinema. During the first decade of the twentieth century, thousand-foot "one reel" films of fourteen minutes were standard fare.[46] In Edmonton movie houses, such as the Bijou, a "program" consisted of several films interspaced by live acts, frequently singers and musicians.[47]

Edmonton's second Empire theatre, opening in 1909, and the Lyceum, formerly the Edmonton Opera House, remained as live theatre houses. The Empire had a regular practice of booking vaudeville acts for the first half of the week, and "legitimate" theatre productions from touring troupes for the second half. Vaudeville acts supplied from the Pantages circuit were offered from 1909 to 1911,[48] when the Empire went on the Orpheum circuit.[49] While mismanagement, fires, and the changing tastes of a growing city forced many theatres to close after only a few years of business, the Empire, with its family-style entertainment, appears to have been the most popular theatre from approximately 1907 until 1913. With its frosted electric lights and dark red-panelled walls with green leather borders, the Empire was also a beautiful theatre. "It's safe to say," announced the Journal in 1909 when the theatre opened, "that no more artistic interior is to be found in any theatre in Canada."[50] As Edmonton's first exclusively-built vaudeville house, the Empire received a good taste of the international talent of the time. Indeed, the Empire had the distinction of hosting Sarah Bernhardt in 1913 during one of her "final" North American tours.[51]

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[45] Orrell, p. 81.

[46] Thomas W. Bohn and Richard L. Stromgren, Light and Shadows (Port Washington, N.Y.: Alfred Publishing Co., 1975), p. 18.

[47] Bulletin, December 30, 1950.

Shortly after the Lyceum opened in 1910, a local company, the Sherman Musical Comedy Company, performed there, receiving a rather ambiguous review from the Bulletin:

> The comedy was excellent..."The Edmonton Exhibition", as this musical melange is entitled is a burlesque, full of genuine bunco games as well as impossible ones. The ridiculous complications

[48] Journal, September 24, 1949.

[49] Orrell, p. 74.

[50] Journal, January 2, 1909.

[51] Bulletin, November 6, 1912.

> are speedily tangled and satisfactorily untangled in sixty minutes and leave the impression of a two hour's show.[52]

While the Empire split its production week equally between road shows and vaudeville, the Lyceum played host to resident stock companies. Contrasting with the primarily American-based theatrical offerings at the Empire, the Lyceum featured such troupes as the Winnipeg Stock Company. They opened their eight-month run in 1912 at the Lyceum with The Wolf, a drama supposedly set in Canada's northwest.[53] Of the fifty-three plays performed by the Winnipeg Stock Co. in Edmonton, John Orrell lists twenty-three as comedies and farces, twenty-seven dramas and melodramas, and three "romantic costume pieces."[54] In February of 1913 the dozen-member company left for Saskatoon and Moose Jaw.

By 1913 the Lyceum was advertising itself as "Edmonton's Only Stock Playhouse."[55] The Empire included in its Orpheum vaudeville bill "Thomas A. Edison's Latest and Greatest Invention -- Talking and Moving Pictures."[56] For the other half of the week the Empire presented such American musical hits as The Merry Widow produced by Henry W. Savage[57] and The Chocolate Soldier (adapted from

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[52] Bulletin, August 24, 1910.

[53] Orrell, p. 94.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Henderson's Directory, 1913, "Theatres", City of Edmonton.

[56] Bulletin, February 11, 1913.

[57] Bulletin, April 26, 1913.

Shaw's Arms and The Man) by the Whitney Opera Company.[58] Neither theatre, however, was immune to the effects of the opening of Edmonton's new vaudeville palace -- the Pantages.

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[58] Bulletin, October 5, 1912.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPENING OF THE PANTAGES THEATRE IN EDMONTON

Edmonton in 1913 was a city of contrasts. Hundreds of horse-drawn vehicles shared the dirt streets with the increasingly frequent motor car traffic. John Walter's ferry was retired when the high level bridge opened, and the Edmonton Journal announced: "STUPENDOUSNESS OF HIGH LEVEL BRIDGE IS AMAZING".[1] Built at the cost of a dollar a rivet and four lives, the bridge had a span of almost half a mile. Transient's tents dotted the river valley, while buildings of relatively greater permanence such as the Tegler Building and the Macdonald Hotel were nearing completion. A mere ten years after medicine showmen stood hawking their wares at the corner of the Alberta Hotel, Sarah Bernhardt visited Edmonton while on a North American tour. In May of 1913 the Pantages Theatre opened in Edmonton, providing Edmontonians with the most elaborate emporium of entertainment ever seen in the city.

Realizing the popularity and commercial potential for vaudeville in Edmonton, businessman George Brown envisioned a local vaudeville palace combination office building as a viable investment for his money. After all, the Empire was doing well with vaudeville supplied from the Orpheum circuit, and by 1913 the

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[1] MacGregor, p. 201.

Bulletin's entertainment page announced: "Edmonton In Line for 5 Circuits". The accompanying text revealed that there would be:

> ...a complete change of the theatrical map, so far as this city is concerned, as three vaudeville circuits other than the Orpheum and Pantages are said to be seeking locations here...[2]

The above article appeared two days before the opening of the Pantages and went on to imply that the success of the new house would determine Edmonton's ability to attract other reputable theatre chains:

> According to theatrical men who are supposed to know whereof they speak, Sullivan and Considine are only waiting to see what effect the entrance of the Pantages circuit will have locally. If the coast circuit makes an impression on the local map, it is probable that John Considine, grand panjandrum of the S. and C. faction, will cast his eyes this way, and may even build here this fall.[3]

Edmontonians were first made aware of Brown's business venture in March of 1912, when it was announced that he would erect a "Skyscraper Block" on the corner of Jasper Avenue and 102nd Street. The "New Ten-Storey Building" was to house a "Large Theatre on the Ground Floor", with the balance of the structure used for stores and offices.[4] Lacking the capital necessary to erect the building, Brown left for Seattle to negotiate with the west-coast vaudeville promoter, Alexander Pantages. Pantages agreed to become a partner, but did not agree to foot the entire bill. However, Brown convinced Edmonton city council to grant the project a loan of fifty-thousand dollars; thus, the project was underway.[5]

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[2] Bulletin, May 10, 1913.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Bulletin, March 15, 1912.

A Seattle newspaper carried the details of the erection of the new theatre in June of 1912, and a reprint of this article in the Bulletin revealed that Edmonton would be the recipient of "...the handsomest theatre in Western Canada". Pantages also announced his plans to erect theatres at Moose Jaw, Saskatoon and Vancouver. The Saskatchewan houses were to be built at a proposed cost of $250,000 each, while Vancouver's structure was budgeted for $300,000. According to the Seattle article Edmonton's theatre would cost about $375,000.[6]

If indeed Edmonton's new Pantages did cost as much as the Seattle article indicated, it is likely that Brown was left to raise most of that sum by himself. The fact that the great vaudeville magnate was attracted to Edmonton may have inspired a collective pat on the backs for entrepreneur Brown and city council, but Pantages certainly had no intention of making the Edmonton theatre the star of his constellation. In a letter to his architect in Seattle, Pantages cautions him to keep costs down:

> ...you know that part of the country is 50 years behind and we can't afford to spend much money. The less money we spend the better off we'll be.[7]

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[5] Tony Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 245.

[6] Bulletin, June 29, 1912.

[7] Byron Christopher, "Intermission - Edmonton's Pantages/ Strand Theatre", CKXM Stereo, letter dated April 20, 1912.

At any rate, the final product was grand in relationship to what was for the most part, the dingy clapboard structures of downtown Edmonton in 1913.

Benjamin Marcus Priteca was the principle architect for the Pantages network of theatres, having designed his first Pantages theatre at age 21.[8] Priteca's early renderings for all the Pantages theatres were fanciful adaptations of Greek architecture combined with quasi-Italian Renaissance stylings. His design for the Edmonton theatre was no exception.

Brown's architect was E.C. Hopkins, who designed the office structure which formed the frontage and entrance to the theatre. Brown originally desired a ten-storey office structure to be built in conjunction with the new theatre, as is indicated in a report from the Bulletin of March 15, 1912. But by June of the same year Brown conceded to a five-storey structure.[9] Yet, two days before the theatre opened the Bulletin ran an article stating: "In front [of the theatre] will be the new ten-storey Brown Block, through which will be the main entrance."[10] Brown was determined to erect a 1913-style skyscraper, as foundations were built to accommodate a fifteen-storey structure.[11] The office building, however, never did extend beyond two storeys. (See plate 3.)

[8] Terry Helgesen, "The Works of B. Marcus Priteca", Marquee, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1972, p. 3.

[9] Bulletin, June 29, 1912.

[10] Bulletin, May 10, 1913.

[11] Edmonton Journal, February 22, 1963.

The erection of the largest theatre that Edmonton was yet to see was not constructed without problems. The giant girder used to support the upper mezzanine was hitched to two electric streetcars, which pulled the metal hulk in a cart along Jasper Avenue. The 80 foot long and 56 ton girder took all night to be removed from the cart, only to land across the tracks, effectively blocking traffic all morning until it was lifted into the theatre on steel rollers with a winching engine.[12]

The opening of the Pantages Theatre on May 12, 1913 had considerable impact on Edmonton's entertainment and social scene. Tickets for opening night went on sale from a little wooden booth in front of the unfinished building four days before the theatre's opening. The office buildings to the front of the theatre were far from completion, but there was a boosted effort to finish the Pantages for opening night, six days away from this Edmonton Journal report:

> Inside the theatre today everybody is working. There are special gangs of men working every minute of the day so that the play house will be ready in time. The entrance is also being hurried along.[13] (See plate 4.)

The local newspapers devoted ample space to the upcoming gala opening of Edmonton's new vaudeville palace. The Bulletin reported on the events marked for the occasion:

[12] Bulletin, November 18, 1912.

[13] Edmonton Journal, May 6, 1913.

> After tonight the Pantages theatre will be open for all time to come. There is only one thing left to do before it will be ready for the performers, and that task falls to Edmonton's mayor, who will read a short address from the stage tonight. Sixteen hundred people will hear Mayor Short, for tickets have been sold to that many. It will be a big theatrical occasion, for never in the history of the city has the opening of a theatre been attended with as much display as this one. The program is a big one. Yesterday the vaudeville artists arrived and are ready for the opening bill, which is one of the best on the circuit. It will be the first time it has ever been seen in a Canadian circuit.[14]

Not to be outdone by the Bulletin, the Edmonton Journal printed the following glowing report:

> ...the program for tonight is a big one. It will be an unusual one for the local theatre goers inasmuch as this is the first grand opening of a thoroughly modern vaudeville theatre. The bill is not the only feature, for it will not be until Mayor Short ascends the stage that the vaudeville house will be really opened. The different acts are exceptionally good ones and it will be the first time they have even been seen on the Pantages circuit.[15]

All sixteen hundred seats were quickly sold; the Edmonton Journal reported a sell-out well before opening night. On the big night the crowd was kept waiting in the lobby and on the sidewalk in front of the theatre while there was a "wild scramble putting the finishing touches on all the interior furnishings." Confusion reigned on opening night:

[14] Bulletin, May 12, 1913.

[15] Edmonton Journal, May 12, 1913. The Bulletin report is more accurate; the May 6, 1913 edition of the Bulletin reported: "The bill will not be any particular one for the grand opening of the Edmonton theatre, but the same following the circuit."

> It was nearly nine o'clock before the crowd was admitted, and there in the confusion occasioned in a new house, there was another half hour before all the sixteen hundred people had found their seats. But when everyone finally had been placed, all were ready for anything that might happen. And all kinds of things were on the program.[16]

The Bulletin reported that Mayor Short "proved quite the hit of the evening", formally opening the theatre with a brief speech complimenting the owners and expressing "...the hope that everything given on the stage would maintain the high standard set by the building."[17] Just before Short gave his address, "Mac" McDermid took flashlight photos of the opening night crowd. (See plate 6.)

Although the bill of fare was a standard show on the Pantages circuit, and was not created especially for the Edmonton opening, audiences were generally left impressed. However, the show did not go uncriticized by the Bulletin. The entertainment began with moving pictures, which, said the Bulletin, "...might have been omitted owing to the late start ", followed by the acrobatic Florenz Trio. Belle Oliver sang, then there was a playlet called "The Police Inspector", "...which left the audience wondering just what was the plot." According to the Bulletin report, the last two acts, Coogan[18] and Cox (humourists), and the Alisky

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[16] Bulletin, May 13, 1913.

[17] Edmonton Journal, May 13, 1913.

[18] In his autobiography, Charlie Chaplin tells of seeing Coogan and Cox perform in the States. While Chaplin saw "nothing extraordinary" with Coogan, his son Jackie gained stardom by inspiring and starring in Chaplin's The Kid.
Charles Chaplin, My Autobiography (London: The Bodley Head, 1964), pp. 248-249.

Hawaiians (musicians and dancers), were the most popular. By the time the "generous applause" died down for the Alisky Hawaiians, it was nearly midnight.

The Edmonton Journal, however, considered opening night at the Pantages an unqualified success, even though a "large and fashionable" audience was kept waiting on the street:

> A delay of about forty five minutes was caused at the commencement, but this was explained by the fact that the workmen had not yet finished inside...Then the curtain dropped for the motion play [moving pictures] and Alexander Pantages' performances in Edmonton became a reality.
>
> There were live acts to the bill, and all were good ones, considering the popular prices charged. Two of these were exceptionally good and fully deserved the applause of the audience. The Alisky Hawaiians proved very entertaining with their singing and musical entertainments, while the beautiful scenery which the act carries with it is a feature in itself. Coogan and Cox... deserved special mention.
>
> Then there was "The Police Inspector" with five people in the cast, Belle Oliver, "The Tetrazini of Ragtime", and the Florenz Trio, European equillibrists. All these three acts were heartily applauded. "The Police Inspector" had a little plot to the sketch inasmuch as it showed how the police solved a murder mystery by a brief third degree examination. Miss Oliver sang several times to the delight of the audience, and the Florenz trio went through some different stunts.[19]

Although the Edmonton Journal announced on May 6, 1912 that Alexander Pantages himself would be present at the opening ceremonies, Edmontonians had to be satisfied with his right-hand man from Seattle, J.J. Claxton.[20] At the end of the performance,

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[19] Edmonton Journal, May 13, 1913.

[20] Ibid.

George Brown invited prominent guests, performers and press to a banquet at his Empress Hotel. Presenting architect Priteca with a gold watch, Brown praised him for having "taken as much pains to make this theatre as splendid as he had taken with any other of the Pantages amusement playhouses."

With its "two-a-day" schedule, Pantages vaudeville quickly became a success in Edmonton. Having one show at 2:30 and another at 8:30, Edmontonians were kept entertained with the same variety and quality of performers which visited larger North American centres. However, an article from the Edmonton Journal reveals some negative public outcry regarding Pantages' pricing system. Responding to "protests and unfilled seats" less than two weeks after the theatre's opening, prices were reduced from 75¢ for the best seats in the house to 50¢. Alexander Pantages was as much businessman as showman, as is indicated in his replay to the manager:

> If the Edmonton public wants and expects 50-cent vaudeville, by all means give it to them. I would rather play to full houses at 50-cents then three-quarter-filled houses at higher rates.[21]

The new fees were settled at 15¢ and 25¢ for matinees, evenings 25¢, 35¢ and 50¢, and boxes remained a standard 75¢. The prevailing rate for vaudeville in Edmonton was 50¢ for the best seats.

At about the same time that local theatre-goers fussed about high admission prices, the Edmonton Journal announced that Edmonton was "...still abuzz with excitement over the opening of

[21] Edmonton Journal, May 22, 1963.

the magnificient Pantages theatre...." The Edmonton Journal gushed about the new gem on Jasper as being worth all the expense and trouble, "the finish of the ceilings, the artistic way in which the boxes were laid out, and the cozy little loges in the balcony are something new to Edmonton."[22]

Indeed, the glitter and spectacle which was vaudeville combined with the opulence of the new Pantages Theatre denied the dinginess of the muddy streets and wooden buildings of the rapidly expanding boom town.

The theatre itself was five storeys high, built throughout of "absolute fireproof material." The front of the theatre was finished with marble panels trimmed with bronze and bevelled glass. The abundance of bedford stone used on the exterior hardly hinted at the marvels inside, which included elaborate plaster relief work which rivaled the decor of any wedding cake. Two marble staircases bordered the lobby area, and enhancing the Italian Renaissance effect:

> ...the color scheme is of ivory and gold mellowed by soft old rose tint and the walls of the main auditorium are panelled with real damask figured silk imported direct from the Chinese capital. This gives a softness and a richness that cannot be obtained from any other material.[23]

An elaborately decorated theatre on its own would hardly guarantee a succession of full houses; curiosity-seekers only had to come once to satisfy their desire to see the new Edmonton architectural marvel. Besides, all kinds of plaster gee-gaws were to be seen at the newly-finished Legislature Buildings, and this could be had for free. The theatre structure itself was a sort of shrine for the vaudeville which it contained; at best, it was a stopping-off point deemed suitable by Pantages for his particular brand of popular entertainment. Alexander Pantages maintained a solid understanding of the entertainment wants and needs of his public. Pantages felt that two hours of variety entertainment was what his audiences wanted, so variety they got. Singers, dancers, comedians, acrobats, magicians and chorus girls, plus sketches and playlets often constituted the bill of fare. Pantages operated under the assumption that the public would keep coming back to see pretty girls, so he included more females in his shows than were in those of the Orpheum circuit,[24] his major competitor at the Empire theatre. (See plate 8a.)

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[22] Edmonton Journal, May 27, 1913.

[23] Bulletin, May 10, 1913.

Shortly after the theatre opened, Pantages' press consistently vaunted bills which would include "something for everyone." A new bill was announced each week; the press release for the theatre's third week of business is typical of the kind of vaudeville favoured on the Pantages circuit:

> A play for young and old, grouch and smiler, worker and idler, dandy and slouch is what Fred J. Ardath will present to Pantages patrons next week. He comes here with a company of fiteeen people in that farce comedy entitled "Hiram".
>
> There are a score of pretty girls, a group of funny comedians and a coterie of vaudeville celebrities. All these take

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[24] Tony Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 246.

> part in one of the best one-act musical comedies ever seen in this city. It has been on the road for a long time. Already it has rounded the Pantages circuit, and is making a second turn.
>
> The production is elaborate in every respect. A laugh is in store for all who attend, and in fact there is more jolity in this act than ever was combined in one performance.
>
> One of the other acts on the bill is the Olga Samaroff Trio composed of the violin, 'cello and piano. Howard and Delores, that classy team, also come to the Pantages next week. Ray Le Pear, the blacksmith singer, is on the bill while Carmen and Roberts, European equilibrists, complete the outfit.[25]

To ensure that press releases such as the one above would be printed in full, Pantages' publicity department saved the puffery and superlative adjectives for the ads. A Pantages press release rarely contained any excessively inflated language; they were concise, and usually had a ring of honesty. In 1920, when interviewed for a magazine article, Pantages impressed the interviewer by stating that "...Pantages copy is confined to the absolute facts."[26] However, an examination of the competition's press releases shows no appreciable difference in writing style or tone. Either other circuits copied the Pantages technique or also realized that inflated rhetoric would wind up in the newspaper editor's wastebin.

Although the Pantages theatre was by far the largest and grandest house in Edmonton, the local press awarded equal space to the other live theatres. Even though the opening of the Pantages constituted a theatrical event such as the city had never seen, the Lyceum and the Empire continued to enjoy their share of press and, conceivably, audiences. The tremendously popular Uncle Tom's Cabin arrived at the Lyceum at the same time the Pantages opened. The production had one of the smallest "Little Eva's" even seen in Western Canada, and the play came equipped with:

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[25] Bulletin, May 21, 1913.

[26] Warren E. Crane, "Alexander Pantages", System, March, 1920, pp. 502-503.

> ...every scenic accoutrement it is possible to put on the Lyceum stage, including the time-honored allegory of Little Eva going to heaven. Eliza crossing the ice pursued by blood-thirsty hounds, and the big auction sale of negroes, all of which are considered quite necessary to all productions of "Uncle Tom's Cabin".[27]

Meanwhile, the Pantages' major competitor in the form of the Empire theatre maintained its split-week policy of vaudeville and "legitimate" theatre. Within one week in June, the Empire hosted several "big names". On the Orpheum bill singer Irene Franklin appeared with composer Theodore Bendix, and for the other half of the week Maude Adams played in Peter Pan. Just in case Edmontonians had not heard of this celebrity, the Bulletin briefed its readership: "...Miss Adams has been having an extraordinarily sucesssful tour in the play and no doubt will find a warm welcome awaiting her in this city."[28]

In contrast, Alexander Pantages rarely relied on a single prominent celebrity-performer to attract audiences. Rather, the acts featured in Edmonton during the first year of operation tended

[27] Bulletin, May 12, 1913.

[28] Bulletin, June 9, 1913.

towards the novel. One week trained seals were featured, starring "Elmer", who was billed as "the seal with the human brain." Frequently individual acts contained remarkable variety, as was the case with a particularly versatile group of champion jugglers:

> The five Mortons are this season offering a program that is varied. Although they are primarily athletes and gymnasts, yet they are vocalists and harmonists of some reputation. [sic] Their act is also elaborately costumed.[29]

Contained within the same article is the announcement that the five-act policy would be expanded to six. Along with variety acts, the "Pantagescope"[30] frequently appeared on the weekly bill.

Often American performers toured with the Pantages circuit in the hopes of becoming big stars in their native United States. Such was the case with the Marx Brothers, who came to Edmonton via the Pantages circuit in 1913. Although they were headliners, the four comedians had a few years to go as far as stardom was concerned, and Edmonton audiences were left less than impressed:

> The Four Marx Bros. with their musical comedy skit, entitled "Hi Skool" has some very pretty music and two or three clever bits of business that are almost new.[31]

But Edmontonians continued to be generally impressed by Pantages entertainment and the palace which housed it. Exactly one year after the theatre opened, the Edmonton Journal announced the Pantages' anniversary which would be celebrated in the "Most Northerly High Class Vaudeville Playhouse in North America." The Edmonton Journal described the event as "...an occasion for rejoicing, marking as it does the fact that the people of the city have placed their stamp of approval on the shows that have graced the stage."[32]

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[29] Bulletin, August 8, 1913.

[30] Moving pictures shown at vaudeville theatres often took on the name of the circuit; the Empire Theatre had the "Orpheumscope".

[31] Bulletin, August 11, 1913.

As special as the Pantages theatre may have been to Edmonton audiences in 1913, the Edmonton house was hardly unique on the Pantages circuit. The same entertainments were shown on the circuit from San Francisco to Edmonton, and most of these acts were housed in Pantages theatres far larger and grander than Edmonton's. By 1913 Pantages had leased theatres in Calgary and Vancouver, and preparations were made to open a brand new Pantages theatre in Winnipeg. Edmonton was just another extension to Pantages' rapidly expanding circuit, albeit the most northerly link on the Pantages vaudeville network.

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[32] Edmonton Journal, May 12, 1914.

CHAPTER THREE

I

ALEXANDER PANTAGES AND THE PANTAGES VAUDEVILLE CIRCUIT

Edmonton may have had the "Most Northerly High Class Vaudeville Playhouse in North America" in 1914, but ironically it was in Canada's far north that Alexander Pantages began his series of theatres. In Dawson he established the first of what was to become a multi-million dollar chain of vaudeville palaces studding North American centres from as far south as San Diego to as far north as Edmonton. There exists very little information about Pantages and what there is tends to emphasize the more sensational aspects of his past. The fact remains that Pantages, virtually single-handedly, created an empire of theatres which catered to his particular brand of vaudeville entertainment.

Born Pericles Pantages, the boy adopted the name Alexander after hearing the story of Alexander the Great.[1] At age nine Pantages ran away from home, leaving his native Greece to become a cabin boy. Before Pantages arrived in Dawson in his early twenties, he had worked as a laborer on the Panama Canal, a waiter, restaurant manager, bootblack;[2] at age thirteen he was a utility boy in vaudeville theatres in San Francisco and in late adolescence he even attempted prize fighting.[3] Although Pantages had no formal education, his exceptional memory and ability with figures compensated for his illiteracy.[4] Pantages evidently spoke half a dozen languages, among them "English as bad as any" according to an acquaintance of his.[5] Even after he achieved success, Pantages could not read, and story has it that when given a contract or some other piece of business, he would pretend to read it, then handing it to an employee would ask, "See that you make the same of this as I do." Pantages relied on trusted employees, close friends and family to handle correspondance and business documents.[6]

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[1] Murray Morgan, Skid Road, An Informal Portrait of Seattle (New York: Viking Press Inc., 1960), p. 151.

[2] Theodore Saloutos, "Alexander Pantages, Theatre Magnate of the West", Pacific Northwest Quarterly, October 1966, p. 138.

In 1897 Pantages withdrew his life savings -- more than $1,000 -- and left for the Klondike. His ship was loaded with con artists who extracted him of all but 25¢. Undoubtedly his preoccupation with amassing wealth succumbed temporarily to his need to survive, so in Skagway he took a job as a waiter.[7] Pantages garnered enough information about the trail to the gold fields, and thus he offered his services as a guide to some new arrivals to the north. A greenhorn himself, Pantages later stated that the party made it to Dawson with no small dose of luck; he admitted

[3] Warren Eugene Crane, "Alexander Pantages", System, March, 1920, p. 502.

[4] Evidence to Pantages' illiteracy is found in his early correspondance which is written in a variety of styles; it would be impossible for one person to have such varied penmanship.

[5] Morgan, p. 151.

[6] Saloutos, p. 137.

[7] Morgan, p. 152.

that his technique of shooting the rapids "...was to close his eyes and trust that he was too young to die."[8]

Pantages soon realized that gold panning was not the fastest route to wealth, so he worked in saloons and learned how to press his thumb on the bar to pick up stray bits of gold dust and to spill a little from the miner's poke to be swept up later.[9] Pantages also realized the potential for entertainment, so he convinced the saloon owner to offer amusement, whereby the establishment prospered. Pantages then formed an alliance with "Klondike Kate" Rockwell, whom Pantages convinced to invest in his new dance-hall saloon. The resulting house, the Orpheum, became the most successful house in Dawson,[10] charging $12.50 a seat for variety-vaudeville featuring "Klondike Kate".[11] Instead of labouring in the gold fields, Pantages simply extracted the ore from the pockets of those who already had. In later years he recalled, "I saw people eating and drinking, always trying to be happy."[12] He profitted well by this observation.

By 1902 the influx of miners into Dawson had lessened considerably as the gold fields became depleted. Realizing that the gold rush had lost its glitter, Pantages left for Seattle. He rented a small store, installed benches and a movie projector, hired a vaudeville act and opened the Crystal Theatre.[13] Admission was 10¢, with no specified showtimes, so people lined up to wait for a performance to end so they could be seated. Evidently, Pantages would try to speed up the twenty-minute show, and the moving pictures would streak across the screen in a blur of streaks and shadows.[14] High audience turn-over was obviously Pantages' priority.

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[8] Morgan, p. 152.

[9] Joe Bigelow, "Pantages, Vet Vaudeville Showman, Dies at 65", Variety Weekly, February 19, 1936.

[10] Pierre Burton, Klondike (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1963), p. 424.

[11] Morgan, p. 154.

[12] Saloutos, p. 138.

Pantages did well with the Crystal, so he opened a larger house which he named after himself. The new Pantages Theatre had more vaudeville acts than moving pictures, and he kept the old 10¢ admission price. The "leading vaudeville house of Seattle", as it was advertised, did well, and in 1907 Pantages opened his third theatre, the Lois, named for his wife of two years.[15] Although motion pictures were popular at the time, Pantages put little faith in the form, as he felt that this novelty would never supplant what he called "in-the-flesh-theatrics."[16] As Pantages began to expand his west-coast network, he focused on live vaudeville acts, but moving pictures in the form of the "Pantagescope" were included in almost every bill.

[13] Saloutos, p. 139.

[14] Morgan, p. 154.

[15] Saloutos, p. 140.

[16] *Ibid*., p. 138.

By the time that Pantages had expanded into Canada and built the Edmonton house, every important city in the Northwest had a theatre either controlled or owned by him. (Pantages theatres were in Seattle, Spokane, Calgary, Vancouver, Tacoma, Portland, and San Francisco.) He had not, as yet, built a theatre which failed to make him money.[17] Along with the main office in Seattle, Pantages had offices in New York, Chicago, Denver and San Francisco, besides an agent in Europe.[18]

A notice in a Seattle newspaper in 1908 indicates Pantages' concern to have family patronage:

> CLEAN BILLS - The following houses at their performances yesterday presented programs free from vulgarity: Coliseum, Pantages, Star.[19]

Pantages did well with his three Seattle houses; the Crystal and the Pantages had vaudeville, but the Lois was a stock-company theatre, where from 1906 to 1910 companies engaged at the theatre performed there for at least a year.[20] Except for the Lois, vaudeville was featured in all of Pantages' theatres.

By 1909, "big time" vaudeville in the form of the Keith and Albee circuits had formed a virtual monopoly in the eastern part of the U.S.; many actors and producers of vaudeville grew disenchanted with this and sought out the less huge chains.[21] The Pantages circuit was one of the smaller syndicates that boomed as a result of this. One-time vaudevillian Joe Laurie Jr. defines the Pantages circuit as "medium-time", as distinguished from "big-time, small-time, big-small-time, and small-small-time." Big-time houses generally offered shows on a "two-a-day" basis, and small-time did more than two-a-day or charged cheaper admission. The big-time theatres, of course, offered a better calibre of entertainers and stars of the day. Although Pantages played many big-time, high-salaried acts, he was never considered big-time.[22]

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[17] Saloutos, p. 140.

[18] Eugene Clinton Elliot, A History of Variety-Vaudeville in Seattle -- From the Beginning to 1914 (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 1914), p. 61.

[19] Joe Laurie Jr., Vaudeville From the Honky-Tonks to the Palace (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1953), p. 243.

[20] Mary Katherine Rohrer, The History of Seattle Stock Companies From Their Beginning to 1934 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1945), p. 17.

Pantages became well-known in Seattle when he syndicated his theatres in 1905.[23] With his three theatres he formed the Pantages Vaudeville Circuit; by 1910 a Seattle newspaper, the Argus, claimed that:

> There is no circuit in the United States, if indeed there is no circuit in the world of the magnitude of the Pantages circuit owned by one man. [sic] He owns outright or has interest in twenty-six theatres.[24]

At this time, the Pantages chain extended from Vancouver to Los Angeles, and as far east as Kansas City.

Pantages' competition on the west coast consisted of the

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[21] Abel Green and Joe Laurie Jr., Show Biz From Vaude to Video (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1951), p. 70.

[22] Joe Laurie Jr., p. 402.

[23] The Seattle Times, August 27, 1973.

[24] Saloutos, p. 141, from the Seattle Argus, April 23, 1910.

Orpheum circuit, whose territory ran down the Pacific Coast,[25] and the Sullivan-Considine circuit, which had established a series of theatres on the American west coast and British Columbia.[26] Pantages evidently liked to locate his theatres next door to his competition: "I'll take the overflow," he stated.[27] Pantages' success led to bitter ongoing business disputes with John Considine, which culminated in Pantages purchasing some of the Sullivan-Considine theatres. Pantages' daughter, Carmen, eventually married Considine's son.[28]

Vaudeville performers were well aware of the rivalry between the Sullivan-Considine and Pantages circuits, and would hold out on contracts until they arrived in Seattle, could meet with each other and see which circuit would offer them more money.[29] While Considine tried to woo performers with money, Pantages would order a moving van to the train station to load the actors' equipment and sets to be delivered to his theatre.[30] Pantages made a point of keeping one step head of his competition: "...if the Sullivan-Considine houses announced the appearance of a handcuff king, Pantages would bring one directly from New York and have him on

[25] Joe Laurie Jr., p. 401.

[26] Saloutos, p. 140.

[27] Elliot, p. 63.

[28] Bigelow, Variety Weekly, February 19, 1936.

[29] Morgan, p. 156.

[30] Ibid.

hand a day earlier."[31] A story is related of a xylophone trio that arrived in Seattle in 1909, and were tempted with double Pantages' offer by Considine. They notified Pantages that their contract with him was not binding, whereupon Pantages ordered his stage manager to burn the xylophones. The trio pleaded that the instruments had been their bread and butter for twenty years, but Pantages held fast to his order, and thus succeeded in pirating yet another act away from the competition.[32]

Vaudeville circuits generally booked acts as they were required; popular acts stayed on circuit as long as they made money for the owner and less lucrative acts would be dismissed as soon as possible. In order to keep track of audience-pleasing acts and to reduce managerial expenses, Pantages innovated "office acts", whereby an act which was successful would be owned by the Pantages head office. Office acts were usually dance acts or full-stage comedies.[33] Although Pantages maintained a manager in each of his theatres, he usually had knowledge of how well each house was run, and he probably used some office acts as spies to report back to him on other performers, the house, and the management.[34] Joe Laurie Jr. recalls Pantages' phenominal memory: "He could remember salary, position on the bill, when the act played for him, and how

[31] Elliot, p. 59.

[32] Morgan, p. 156.

[33] Joe Bigelow, Variety Weekly.

[34] Joe Laurie Jr., p. 402.

they went over." To Laurie, Pantages was "...a very good vaude showman."[35]

The effects of the First World War virtually destroyed the Sullivan-Considine circuit, and Pantages picked up the pieces to add to his growing string of playhouses.[36] Conditions during the war were bad for vaudeville, and many circuits had trouble adjusting to war-time economic stringency and the resulting cancelled contracts.[37] Pantages managed to weather the period, and by the end of the war, he had one of the most secure vaudeville circuits in North America.[38]

Pantages was not adverse to novelty, and when head-liner acts became scarce during the war years, he scoured the prisons for acts. Evidently this idea worked, as people flocked to see Ed Morrell, formerly of the Evan-Sontag outlaws in California, and George Schroder, an ex-forger billed as "Convict 6630 - The Man Who Sang Himself out of the Penitentiary."[39] As long as an act would fill seats and be acceptable family-type fare, Pantages would consider booking it. He had no pretentions about entertainment for the masses; he maintained an incredible ability to determine what his patrons wanted to see:

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[35] Joe Laurie Jr., p. 402.

[36] The Seattle Times, August 27, 1973.

[37] Elliot, p. 64.

[38] Morgan, p. 157.

[39] Green and Laurie Jr., p. 48.

> I do not pretend to be a judge of acts. No vaudeville manager should get that illusion in his head. I permit my audiences to tell me what is good and what isn't. I make a point to like what my audiences like, and theirs is the taste I try to please.[40]

The Edmonton Pantages Theatre warrants mention in several American articles about the Pantages circuit only because of a gimmick Maurice Mulligan, then manager of the Edmonton theatre, had installed. Joe Laurie Jr., in his book Vaudeville, relates the incident:

> During the war in 1914 he put up a wireless on the roof of his theatre in Edmonton, Canada, so the latest war messages could be read between acts. It was seized by the army and dismantled.[41]

The story is not told in its entirety. There really was no "Pantages Radio"; Mulligan was receiving the "bulletins" from the same source as the newspapers -- the Canadian Pacific Telegraph wires. After getting the news, Mulligan would rush onstage to proclaim: "Ladies and gentlemen, here is a message just received from the front through Pantages Radio." The audiences along with the local detachment of the N.W.M.P. believed there really was a "Pantages Radio", and local officials became concerned that classified war-time information could be transmitted as well as recieved. In his More Edmonton Stories, Tony Cashman reveals that:

> ...the transmitter was just a bit of window dressing, and it couldn't transmit anything farther than 200 miles on the best of nights. But even the mounties didn't understand

[40] Saloutos, p. 144, from the Seattle Argus, February 1, 1913.

[41] Joe Laurie Jr., p. 402.

> about radio...[at that time]. They took away the wireless set and ordered the Pantages to take down that 75-foot pole.[42]

Evidently the pole had been implanted in concrete, so it stayed atop the Pantages Theatre for a good many years.[43]

By 1914 the Pantages empire extended in a giant crescent from Winnipeg, through to Edmonton, down the west coast through Vancouver and Seattle, to as far south as San Francisco and up east to Chicago. Pantages announced that a million dollars was to be invested in Canada in 1912,[44] but only two out of the four theatres he planned materialized. Edmonton and Vancouver each received Pantages vaudeville houses in 1913; Saskatoon and Moose Jaw never received their promised Pantages theatres.[45]

Vancouver was treated in 1917 to a new Pantages theatre which replaced the original smaller one. This new theatre, built at a cost of $275,000, had an interior described as "French, Louis the Sixteenth and the exterior facade of ornamental terra cotta as French Renaissance."[46] It had architectural similarity to the interior of the Edmonton theatre but the Vancouver house, as a "pure" theatre, stood independent of offices and stores.[47]

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[42] Tony Cashman, More Edmonton Stories, pp. 62-63.

[43] Ibid., p. 63.

[44] Saloutos, p. 142.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Arthur Irving, Past, Present and Future, unpublished M.S., date unknown, Vancouver City Archives.

[47] Ibid.

Opening a year after its Edmonton counterpart in 1914, the Winnipeg Pantages became the seventeenth theatre on the circuit. The Winnipeg Free Press reported that:

> ...Winnipeg shares with San Francisco the distinction of having the finest Pantages theatre. In some respects, particularly those of ventilation and exit managements, this new theatre has no superior.[48]

Mr. and Mrs. Pantages attended the theatre's opening, and after a week's stay proceeded to Calgary where plans were afoot to erect a house "...practically similar to the handsome Pantages theatre Edmonton opened last summer."[49]

The plans for a new Pantages playhouse in Calgary were never realized. Pantages leased the Lyric theatre in 1910,[50] but the theatre was not advertised as the "Pantages Theatre" until 1914. (Prior to 1914, ads usually read "Pantages Vaudeville at the Lyric Theatre".) Calgary's Grand theatre, like Edmonton's Empire, was on the Orpheum circuit, and the Grand had the distinction of being the largest and most opulent playhouse in the city.[51] Although it was housed in the relatively small Lyric, Pantages vaudeville did well in Calgary, as is indicated in a report from the Calgary Herald:

> An average Pantages bill is not a poor one nor a fair one, and the new program which opened at

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[48] Winnipeg Free Press, February 9, 1914.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Tom Ward, Cowtown (Calgary: McClelland & Stewart West Ltd., 1975), p. 460.

[51] Leishman McNeill, Tales of the Old Town (Calgary: Calgary Herald, no date given), p. 53.

> the popular Eighth avenue vaudeville house Monday is even better than the average offerings there...Manager Inverarity was compelled to turn a large number of people away Monday afternoon, and at the evening show the house was practically filled to capacity.[52]

Included in the bill was a story teller, the Imperial Troupe of Bicycle Basketball artists, comedian-acrobats, a violinist, and Gus Elmore and his Cannibal Maids in a playlet. All was rated as "good, clean entertainment which will be appreciated by Pantages patrons."[53]

At the height of his career, Pantages claimed to have been in control of 250 theatres in the U.S. and Canada.[54] However, what can be established with certainty is his incredible success as a showman and manager of the largest "big-time of the small-time" vaudeville circuits. From 10¢ theatre operation to entertainment mogul, Pantages made his fortune by capitalizing on what he determined the entertainment wants and needs of the growing Canadian and American north-west were. In relating what he felt were the reasons for his success, Pantages admitted that:

> I would change all of my vaudeville houses into grand opera houses tomorrow if the public demanded it. I study my customers and try to anticipate their desires. That, it seems to me, is necessary in successful business.[55]

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[52] The Calgary Herald, December 13, 1915.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Seattle Post-Intelligence Northwest, "Mastermind Alexander Pantages", September 5, 1976.

[55] Crane, p. 502.

II

A SURVEY OF PANTAGES VAUDEVILLE ON THE EDMONTON STAGE

Alexander Pantages was a shrewd enough showman, and businessman, to realize that the successful vehicle of vaudeville relied upon the audience appeal of each individual act. Pantages took pains to create vaudeville bills that were general-audience pleasers; each act was arranged carefully on a bill towards creating a package as finely balanced as Japanese Noh theatre. Pantages had a formula to ensure that each bill had something for everyone:

> When I select a show bill, I realize that I have many different tastes to cater to. There are the children, who like animal acts; there are the young people who like singing and dancing acts; and there are the older people who like playlets. In the bills we cater to them all.[1]

A survey of Pantages vaudeville acts on the Edmonton stage from 1913 to 1921 shows that the circuit favored variety; however, specific types of acts either appear with abundance or as headliners for certain seasons. Novelty numbers featuring chorus girls were popular in the 1913-1914 period. 1915 ushered in a plethora of patriotic productions; developments in the cinema in 1917 radically altered vaudeville bills. Attempts to lure audiences back into the vaudeville houses resulted in an increased borrowing of musicals from the "legitimate" stage in 1918, many of which showed up on the vaudeville stage in a condensed version. Fancy dance acts headlined bills in 1918, and elaborately staged musicals and magic acts were popular from 1920 to 1921. Regardless of contemporary tastes and the changing North American vogue, Alexander Pantages generally continued to create variety bills; the featured headline acts reveal the popular trends of a particular season.

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[1] Crane, p. 503.

At the Pantages in 1914, two acts featured at the theatre's opening in 1913 returned to Edmonton. Coogan and Cox were well received on their return, having supplied "...the real fun..." of the show,[2] but also appreciated was an English mimic named Gilbert Girard:

> His imitations are very clever and includes most everything from the roar of a lion to the cry of a calf, and from a tune on a clarinette to an interesting air on his aeolian harp.[3]

Because "...of the numerous requests that poured into Pantages' producing department in Seattle...", Edmontonians saw again the Alisky Hawaiians, who billed themselves in 1914 as "Alisky's Greater Hawaiian Seranaders."[4] They appeared in the August 22nd bill along with comedians, acrobats, a musical novelty act, and "Custer's Last Fight Outdone", which was a "black face travesty". But the Bulletin reviewer felt that the Alisky Hawaiians constituted the best act:

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[2] Bulletin, July 25, 1914.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Bulletin, August 22, 1914.

> One never tires of hearing the sweet voice songsters of the Southern Sea, or the weird strains of their guitars, with its plaintive sadness.[5]

In March of 1914 the Pantages press agent announced a new type of act, which would be duplicated and imitated frequently for the next eight years. Although Pantages publically announced on repeated occasions that his acts were family-oriented,[6] he capitalized on the then titilating attraction of a stage filled with women revealing their legs in tights. And what better way to present scantily clad ladies than within the respectability of displays of athletic skill? Diving girl acts became the hit of the season. Often travelling on tour complete with their own massive diving tank, many diving acts invited the local Pantages patrons to complete for prizes.[7] The first girl-diving act seen in Edmonton was described in detail by the press agent:

> Lotti Mayer and her diving girls will glitter, glide, sparkle and cavort in the limpid waters of a huge glass tank, displaying all that is latest and graceful in the art of swimming and diving; the tango of the mermaids, as it were. This act is presented in a special scene of entrancing beauty and the huge tank which is the centre-piece of the act, is cunningly arranged and composed of steel, glass and silver, so that everything can be seen all the time.[8]

In December of the same year "Miss Marshall and Her Water Lilies", described as "experts at water pranks" came to Edmonton with a 16,000 gallon capacity tank. Following their act, in which "in plain view of the audience they present an elaborate aquatic art", trophies were awarded to the best local lady or gentleman diver.[9]

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[5] Bulletin, August 22, 1914.

[6] Crane, p. 503.

[7] Edmonton Journal, May 23, 1978.

[8] Bulletin, March 14, 1914.

Another novelty act which proved popular with Edmontonians was Johannes Josefesson of the Gilma Company, who is best described as a forerunner to Bruce Lee of Japanese martial arts fame. Billed as "The Favorite of Kings, Sensation of the Olympic Games, Vanquisher of the Hooligans in London, Victor over Jui Jitsui Experts, Most Feared Man by the Gangsters and Gunmen in New York...", this "Marvel of the Frozen North" was presented by Josefesson himself, who demonstrated Gilma wrestling.[10]

Animal acts were frequently headlined on Pantages bills, and one act required the bracing of the Edmonton stage. The Riding Duttons, billed as "Society Equestrians", lept from carriages to horse-back. This "act delux" featured "...four people and two beautiful specimens of horse flesh."[11]

Meanwhile, the anonymous Bulletin theatre reviewer was expounding the virtues of vaudeville in terms of the form's artistic credibility:

> It appears that there is no artistic pinnacle so high that it cannot be scaled by the vaudeville

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[9] Bulletin, December 5, 1914.

[10] Bulletin, December 12, 1914.

[11] Bulletin, January 24, 1914.

> managers. One by one, the world's greatest artists are contributing their reputation and their talents to the two-a-day stage, as patrons of the theatre well know....[12]

However, it was usually the Empire, on the Orpheum circuit, and not the Pantages which received the "big-name" acts. Alexander Pantages frequently imported acts from Europe,[13] perhaps an indication that he admired skill and craftsmanship over the North American "star" system. Pantages circuit headline acts sometimes included big-names of the day, but Pantages did not rely on names to ensure the success of a bill.

Practically every Pantages bill on the Edmonton stage included a playlet. Playlets represented the most expensive element of a bill, as they often had casts of a dozen or more. Costumes and sets were featured, and audiences would forgive a playlet with a less than brilliant script if the tableau items were impressively staged. However, the theatre critic for the Bulletin states his reasons why one Pantages playlet failed:

> The scene is described as the "spectacular tragedy legend of India" and takes thirty minutes in development. It displays half a dozen young women in filmy draperies doing bare-foot genuflections to the Indian goddess of love. The stage pictures are pleasing, but these faults might be enumerated:
> 1. The music is not Oriental, either in fact or spirit;
> 2. The scenery is reminiscent of Glen Tae, in Lanark country, Ontario, 11,000 miles from Benares, where the plot of the piece is laid;

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[12] Bulletin, January 24, 1914.

[13] Saloutos, p. 145.

3. The dances become tiresome through their sameness; and
4. The whole sketch is devoid of what is known in these latter days as "pep".[14]

Elaborate staging was combined in 1915 with war-interest acts. Shortly after the S.S. Lusitania was sunk off the coast of Ireland, the Pantages production department in San Francisco constructed a miniaturized duplicate of the vessel to depict scenically the sinking of the huge passenger-liner.[15] The United States had not yet officially taken up arms in World War I (Canada joined the effort in 1914; the States declared war in 1917). The destruction of the Lusitania by the German navy was the ideal vehicle for propagandists to reinforce the notion of the "evil Hun", and probably helped encourage American involvement with the British allied forces. At any rate, Edmonton audiences eagerly welcomed any vaudeville entertainment that related to the War. "Sinking of the Lusitania", billed as "A Mechanical Scenic Spectacle Not a Motion Picture", was described in the Bulletin:

> ...construction of the act was started immediately following this terrible disaster. No expense or pains have been sacrificed on the part of the producer to make this offering the most elaborate mechanical scenic spectacle on the stage today. Special communications with the steamship company and survivors from the destroyed steamer make the details of the act exact in every particular.[16]

[14] Bulletin, January 20, 1914.

[15] Bulletin, June 19, 1915.?

[16] Ibid.

Other war-related acts were shown frequently in the form of motion pictures. Defenders of Our Empire was a popular film serial in three parts which showed the British Army Corps demolishing a "hostile army".[17] Closer to home, Edmonton's 49th battalion were filmed in parade drills and manoeuvres; the resulting film was shown for one week with regular Pantages vaudeville.[18]

During the War years, theatrical activity came to a virtual stand-still in the United States. Although the State's entry into the War withered theatre there, Canada was enjoying a period of consistent vaudeville and in 1917 even had its best theatrical season yet.[19] It is possible that official American involvement in the War effort inspired new hope that the War would end shortly, and Canadian theatre-goers may have felt more inclined to attend public amusements.[20] However, in the States, many cities put a ban on public gatherings, and nine out of ten American theatres closed.[21] Theatres and vaudeville circuits were particularly hard-hit during 1917, when:

> Ticket money went into buying Liberty Bonds. Parents stayed home to scan newspapers for reports of their sons' regiments. Close to a million men abandoned theatre attendance for

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[17] Bulletin, November 27, 1915.

[18] Bulletin, May 10, 1915.

[19] Laurie, Jr. and Green, p. 114.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., pp. 113-114.

> close-order drill. Many more millions were busy with war plant overtime, and the Government added the finishing touch by forcing a blackout and curfew on Broadway.[22]

But Alexander Pantages managed to weather this period; he capitalized on the war concern with patriotic acts, films of local regiments, and even the ersatz "Pantages Radio" bulletins.

At the end of 1915 it was announced in Edmonton dailies that the usual Pantages policy of five acts would be expanded into six.[23] In the same announcement, some local performers are advertised as appearing on the Pantages stage. (This may be one of the methods Pantages employed to reduce his costs during war-time.) The Chas. L. Gill Company presented a "playlet of the wilderness" called Outwitted and the Bradbury and Hearne Company offered dramatic sketches to "enthusiastic audiences" in Edmonton before leaving for Winnipeg.[24] Local talent on the Edmonton stage was the exception, not the rule at the Pantages theatre.

Comedians appeared with abundance on Pantages playbills of the 1915-1916 period; frequently two or three different comic-routine acts would appear on the same bill. A rather typical bill of 1916 appears in the week beginning March 4, which included comedians Reddington and Grant ("Dusty Hoboes"), and James J. Morton ("The Monologue Comedian"). Motion pictures were steadily increasing in public favor, and were occasionally sneaking into head-line position on the bills. The March 4 bill featured the "Ottawa Fire Special" which showed on film the destruction by fire of the Canadian Parliament Buildings.[25]

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[22] Laurie Jr. and Green, p. 114.

[23] Bulletin, January 30, 1915.

[24] Ibid.

The Three Keatons toured to Edmonton in 1916, but did not appear as headliners. (A "novel movie musical comedy" called Mr. Inquisitive, was the featured act.)[26] The press notice for the Keatons appeared in the Bulletin:

> The Three Keatons, Joe, Myra and Buster, are one of vaudeville's mainstays for they are one of the recognized acts in the profession. The Keatons are called "Fun's Funniest Family" and there is absolutely no end to the amusement that this clever combination is able to stir up. They have just completed a tour of the large vaudeville houses of the east, having just recently played at Keith's Palace theatre, New York City.[27] (See plate 8b.)

In 1917 a two-act musical called Hello Japan took precedence over the Edmonton appearance of Will Rogers and his wife Mary. Like the Keatons, they had still not attained "star" status and made their living by touring the smaller circuits. Their act was announced as:

> ...a snappy comedy, in which they appear as a domestic couple fresh from a residence in the divorce colony at Reno, Nevada. "It Didn't Take the First Time" is the title of their skit. Their patter is said to be particularly fresh and diverting.[28]

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[25] Bulletin, March 4, 1916.

[26] Bulletin, October 7, 1916.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Bulletin, April 28, 1917.

By 1917 the "photoplay" was well established as a popular entertainment, and cinematic developments resulted in the form's transition from jerky visual situation sequences to the incorporation of characterization.[29] The serialized romantic and adventure stories were the most common formats for screenplays. Ads in Edmonton dailies announced Mary Pickford in A Romance of the Redwoods,[30] Douglas Fairbanks in Manhattan Madness,[31] Romeo and Juliet, a "High Class" film featuring Theda Bara,[32] and assorted "Keystone Komedies."[33] In 1917, ads for movie houses appeared in greater abundance than those for vaudeville attractions. Although Alexander Pantages regarded his "Pantagescope" and other motion pictures as necessary ingredients to his bills, vaudeville to him was far more important than cinema.[34]

Alongside with the announcement of the new week's bill of fare at the Pantages for June of 1917 appears an acknowledgement of cinema's effect on vaudeville:

> The vogue of motion pictures has done many things in the theatrical world besides provide a new kind of employment for thousands of actors. It has among other things provided a new type of

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[29] Bohn and Stromgren, p. 53.

[30] Bulletin, June 9, 1917.

[31] Bulletin, January 27, 1917.

[32] Bulletin, February 3, 1917.

[33] Bulletin, January 27, 1917.

[34] Bigelow, Variety, February 19, 1936.

> musical comedy, with new plots, new ideas of stage dressing. It has caused the sterotyped and conventional "girl" acts to be relegated to the discard heap.[35]

"Girl" acts may have lost their previous vogue, but playlets and other borrowings from the "legitimate" stage appeared with greater frequency along with motion pictures. Edmontonians were selective about their films; in search of entertainment, serials were preferred over news reels:

> For many weeks -- as long as the news weekly has been run at the Pantages theatre -- Edmonton vaudeville patrons have urged Manager Calvert to go back to the system in vogue until two months ago of presenting film serials instead of current events in motion pictures. Requests by hundreds have been sent to the Pantages by people who greatly prefer the fascinating pastime of following the heroine of a serial through a series of startling exploits rather than watching the unfolding of world events....There is an inexplicable charm...to watch the villian pursue the heroine, the hero block his deviltry at the psychological moment, and so on to the tune of fifteen episodes....[36]

Live variety was still featured in Pantages vaudeville, and a week in June of 1917 typified the diversity of acts which graced the stage. Headlined was "The New Producer", wherein "...grand opera gems...interspaced with amusing comedy bits..." constituted an act which the Bulletin defined as "pleasing as it is unusual". Moran and Wiser offered "...something unique in the boomerang throwing class", and Devine and Williams had as their speciality "singing, dancing and talking". The Curzon sisters hung by their teeth from suspended wires, and comedian Harry Coleman returned to Edmonton; the Bulletin announcing that: "He still has his prison drop and his talkative dummy, but otherwise his act is entirely new."[37]

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[35] Bulletin, June 9, 1917.

[36] Bulletin, August 25, 1917.

Second only to moving plays in popularity were musical playlets. Edmontonians eagerly awaited the "Hong Kong Girls", an act produced by Mormons from Salt Lake City, Utah.

> ...the two best musical tabloids that have ever played the local Pantages theatre came from Salt Lake City. These acts are always clean and tuneful. Why Salt Lake City acts should be better than acts from other cities is not explained by the Pantages management...[38]

One month later a "Travesty on Shakespeare" appeared at the Pantages. Miss Hamlet offered "...a Shakespearean plot rebuilt along fun-making lines...and entirely ludicrous situations."[39] "Travesties" and liberal adaptations of legitimate stage productions appeared frequently on Pantages bills well into 1919. It is likely that vaudeville was attempting to assume the appearance of greater sophistication and align with Broadway-style productions as a means to cope with the steadily increasing appeal of the cinema.

While announcing a musical tabloid called An Arabian Night, a Bulletin writer sites an example of how vaudeville artists saved the show because "legit" stage producers failed to find versatile actors. The article opens with a defense of vaudeville:

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[37] Bulletin, June 30, 1917.

[38] Bulletin, April 21, 1917.

[39] Bulletin, May 26, 1917.

> It used to be that vaudeville was looked down upon by artists of the legitimate and musical comedy theatres as a lesser art. But that day has passed. The stars of the legitimate are seeking variety bookings as the "plums" for professionals.[40]

As a direct result of the war effort, many of vaudeville's larger and better acts were "laid off",[41] and smaller acts took their place. This is probably why musical playlets took headline position in terms of popularity, as they were virtually the only "flash" acts left which employed large casts and elaborate scenery. An act which incorporated the two most popular entertainments -- motion pictures and musical comedies -- was a George Choos production which used "...a special motion picture to carry along the story and make the situations more amusing." Described as "...one of the most pretentious musical comedies ever presented...", Oh, That Melody had a cast of fifteen singers and dancers and was designed for "...theatre-goers of every class."[42]

War-interest acts lost much of their prominence on Pantages playbills by 1918, but they still appeared, and often in unusual formats. The anonymous "Bulletin Drama Critic" praised the Pantages circuit in offering the "Liberty Overture", which was a musical interpretation of the War. "It can easily be followed", said the critic, "...even without the full account printed in the program."[43]

[40] Bulletin, May 11, 1918.

[41] Bulletin, August 31, 1918.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Bulletin, July 2, 1918.

Following the "Liberty Overture" was Lucy Gillett, a juggler costumed in "quaint Dutch garb", singers Creamer, Barton and Sparling, Charles Morati in a sketch called "Art and Stupidity", Perish and Peru, acrobats, a musical comedy called En Route which featured a characterization of an "eccentric millionaire", and the serial, "House of Hate".[44] (The "Liberty Overture" was reproduced by the Pantages circuit in 1919 as the "Victory Overture -- a Greeting to All the Boys Who Have Come Home".)[45]

In September of 1918 the Bulletin announced a new serial of "special interest to Canadians". A Fight for Millions was an American-made film about the N.W.M.P. The film left the Bulletin critic less than impressed, as it opened "...like a case of cold storage eggs -- some characters are obviously bad and all are under suspicion."[46]

In October of 1918 theatres in Edmonton abruptly closed. All newspaper notices of theatre attractions disappeared from the local dailies, as the Spanish influenza epidemic caused health officials to ban all public gatherings. Churches and schools were also closed, and coughing, sneezing or expectorating in public without a handkerchief became a punishable offense.[47] By the time the 'flu ran its course, over 3,000 Albertans had died from the

[44] Bulletin, July 2, 1918.

[45] Bulletin, March 25, 1919.

[46] Bulletin, September 17, 1918.

[47] Bulletin, October 18, 1918.

disease.[48] However, by the new year Edmonton was welcoming back many of the men who were sent overseas in the war effort. The theatres had re-opened, with ads which promised even greater attractions for the upcoming new season.

During the season of 1919 fancy dance acts were almost always included in the new Pantages playbills for each week; rarely was a dance act not a headliner. North Americans had found a new vogue. Virtually every kind of dance was adapted to the vaudeville stage: ballet, flamenco, Highland fling, even something billed as a "Snowshoe Dance" joined the deviations from the usual chorus-line dance numbers.

It was announced in February of 1919 that Mlle. Bianca, "premiere danseuse of the Metropolitan Opera House", would lead the bill on Edmonton's Pantages stage:

> With a male and female assistant, Bianca will interpret through the medium of the terpsichorean arts the prettiest and most virile tableaux of the semi-classic and ultra-modern impressionistic dance school.[49]

Shortly after Mlle. Bianca's appearance Colini's Variety Dancers offered to Pantages patrons their version of the history of dance. They would:

> ...trace the history of the modern dance from its beginning as the pirouetting of the Grecian nymphs down through the ages when it changed to the folk terpsichore and gypsy dancing.[50]

[48] James G. MacGregor, A History of Alberta (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1981), p. 239.

[49] Bulletin, February 22, 1919.

[50] Bulletin, March 10, 1919.

In July of 1919 an act called "Kremlin in Moscow" headed the Pantages bill. The Russian troupe presented music and folk dancing which was "...distinctly Russian in motif -- not the Russia of Bolshevism and pillage and reigns of terror, but the Russia of pre-Trotsky days."[51] Two weeks later, the headlining act was supplied by the Mozarts who introduced the "Snowshoe Dance", "...which they do quite gracefully..." in front of backdrops painted to resemble Montreal.[52] Appearing on the same bill was another dance act. Stagpool and Spier impressed the Bulletin reviewer with their stage athletics:

> The man can certainly do the "splits" and in his other moves he holds the audience in wonder as to whether he will get up alive after he lands on his head on the hard stage floor.[53]

Whenever Pantages was faced with a shortage of material, he imported acts from Europe, particularly acrobat acts which he personally favored.[54] At least one acrobatic act appeared on virtually all the Pantages playbills in Edmonton from 1913 to 1921, regardless of the current trend in vaudeville entertainment. One playbill from January of 1919 illustrates well Pantages' integration of European acts into a North American context:

1. Headliner: McKay's Scotch Revue, featuring Wee May McKay, Scotch comedianne in sketches, with dances and songs.

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[51] Bulletin, July 21, 1919.

[52] Bulletin, August 12, 1919.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Bigelow, Variety.

2. "A Little Bit of Irish" featuring Jim Doherty -- Irish songs and jokes.
3. William Sisto -- Italian Statesman, comedian and harmonica player.
4. Derkin's European Novelty dog and monkey animal act.
5. The Zara Carmen Trio hoop and bar acrobats.[55]

The fourteenth episode of The Fight for Millions rounded off the evening with the Pantages Peerless Orchestra.[56]

A well-known character actor of the day, Porter White, appeared in a sketch set in Canada entitled The Hide-A-Way. On the same bill was a musical comedy revue called The Footlight Revue.[57] This act was particularly well-received in Edmonton, and included in the Bulletin's critique is a break-down of the plot. Since most of the playlets and revues were never published, the following Bulletin review gives insight into the type of material favored by vaudeville managers at the time:

> A touch of the old time "hick" opery house days is given at the Pantages...The act opens on a bare stage which is supposed to represent that of an opera house in a small town. The rube[58] manager comes from the front of the house calling as he comes for the stage manager. That individual finally appears in rube character. They go over the list of acts that are to appear and are assigned to their dressing rooms. Following this the show starts. There are some good old ensemble numbers and the comedy

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[55] Bulletin, January 28, 1919.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Bulletin, July 12, 1919.

[58] "Rube" was vaudeville slang for a naive individual, usually of rural background.

> work of the manager and the stage manager is far above average.[59]

During 1920 elaborately staged musical tabloids[60] continued in popularity second only to "grand opera" acts. The opulence and large-cast numbers of pre-war years were returning to Pantages vaudeville. To compete with the movie houses which had enticed many former vaudeville patrons, a continued borrowing from the legitimate stage gave vaudeville an increased sophistication of sorts, along with a colorful visual and aural experience not yet possible in the films of the day. It is likely that Alexander Pantages foresaw the eventual demise of vaudeville to the cinema, but well into the 1920's he continued to provide the Edmonton theatre with at least five vaudeville acts per bill.

In May of 1920 a musical tabloid called The Heart of Annie Wood was headlined. The title was taken quite literally by the scenic artist; "...the setting is an immense heart...at the concluding picture [tableau] the heart contracts, producing something new in effects." The act included nine musical numbers with "...the lyrics outlining the plot."[61] Also appearing on the same bill was Mme. Diana Bonnar from the Chicago Grand Opera Company. Although Pantages may have at one time suggested he would convert his vaudeville empire into an opera outlet if his audiences were

[59] Bulletin, July 12, 1919.

[60] "Tabloids" were condensed versions of full-length musicals or simply a short musical sketch.

[61] Edmonton Journal, May 1, 1920.

so inclined, it is highly unlikely that "grand opera" would satisfactorily constitute a bill, let alone an act. Mme. Bonnar sang a selection of "old time melodies" and some "grand opera" pieces, but the Edmonton Journal's review devotes far more space to describing her wardrobe than her vocal attributes.[62]

Even trained animal acts took on a greater swankiness in the 1920's. An act using trained dogs and ponies called "Gautier's Toy Shop" was defined by the Edmonton Journal's reviewer as "...far above the usual animal act."[63] Earlier in the season a monkey and elephant act called "Little Hip and Napoleon" was well-received in Edmonton; "...the elephant drinks from a bottle, plays a mouth organ, and does a lot of funny things."[64]

But it was the "grand opera" acts which by now had taken precedence over the usual song and dance and comedian acts. Acrobatic acts were still on Pantages playbills, but rarely did two such acts appear on the same bill. In November of 1920 the Imperial Quintette with their "repertoire of numbers from the grand operas" were the headlining attraction of the bill. The Edmonton Journal indicated why "grand opera" had taken on a new prominance with the circuit's weekly offerings:

> This is a class of act for which Alexander Pantages, himself a keen critic of grand opera,

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[62] Edmonton Journal, May 1, 1920.

[63] Edmonton Journal, May 26, 1920.

[64] Edmonton Journal, January 3, 1920.

> has a marked fondness and seldom a season
> passes but such an act is offered.[65]

In 1920, seldom a week passed which did not include at least one act "fresh" from the "Grand Opera" theatres of North America.

It is difficult to define a trend for the Pantages acts of 1921, as the Edmonton house fell victim to legal battles between Brown and Pantages which resulted in the theatre's closure in the late spring. Vaudeville was also fading in significance, as in the Bulletin's weekly theatre listings, the Pantages is the only theatre in Edmonton consistently offering vaudeville.

Press notices and reviews indicate a return to variety in 1921, although musical comedies usually headlined bills. The first bill of the season advertised Last Night, a tabloid musical comedy with a "beautiful dancing chorus", Wilking and Wilkins, dancing comedians "late of the Zeigfield follies", Orville Stamm, who played a violin with a "70-lb. bull dog strapped to the arm that wields the bow", a "song, dance and patter" [66] offering with Paul Petching, and a new film serial, "a real hum-dinger", titled Pirate Gold.[67]

Magicians and hypnotists gained a fair degree of popularity in 1921. Svengali and Trilby appeared in late January.[68] The

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[65] Edmonton Journal, November 13, 1920.

[66] "Patter" is a vaudeville term for dialogue. Two or more vaudevillians engaged in rapid dialogue was known as "patterlogue".

[67] Bulletin, January 7, 1921.

[68] Bulletin, January 29, 1921.

Bulletin relates Svengali's act:

> Audiences love mystery, especially vaudeville audiences, and when Svengali marches through the ranks of his awed listeners next week and successfully transmits their songs to Trilby at the piano, gasps of wonderment are certain to be heard from all sides. How he does it is a bona fide mystery...It will be an exception who comes away unconvinced of the possibility of thought transmission.[69]

Two weeks later Madame Zuleika, billed as "the only woman hypnotist", was the star attraction, arriving from Europe where she was "...one of the greatest sensations in the music halls."[70]

In one of the last bills offered at the Edmonton Pantages in 1921, Staley and Birbeck, "The Mysterious Blacksmiths", appeared in transformation acts, headlining the bill with changing "...from the garb of blacksmiths to drawing room clothes in the flash of an eye."[71] Also appearing were club-jugglers known as the "Five of Clubs" in a "combination novelty" with some singing, a harmony quartette called the "Paramount Four", and two comedians, Harrison and Robinson(Harrison played "a Hebrew mail carrier"),and the predictable acrobat act in the form of the Chandon Trio, aerialists.[72]

By July of 1921 there is virtually no mention of the Pantages Theatre in either the Edmonton Journal or Bulletin amusement

[69] Bulletin, January 29, 1921.

[70] Bulletin, February 19, 1921.

[71] Bulletin, March 31, 1921.

[72] Ibid.

listings; it appears that the theatre ceased operation altogether. The curtain came down on Pantages vaudeville in Edmonton as a result of litigation between George Brown and Alexander and Lois Pantages. As half owners of the Edmonton house, the Pantages' decided that the theatre was unable to meet its financial obligations and should therefore be declared bankrupt.[73] Brown protested this, but Pantages pulled his circuit out of the Edmonton theatre. This is a somewhat curious move by Pantages, as there is no evidence that the Edmonton theatre suffered because of poor attendance or financial difficulty. (The Pantages circuit itself was thriving, as Pantages owned twenty-two theatres outright and controlled interest in twenty-eight, for which he had been offered ten million dollars.)[74] It was announced in September that Brown would re-open the Pantages as a movie house:

> The Metropolitan [Pantages] was the first modern theatre erected in Edmonton, and it has been kept right up to the minute by re-decoration each year. It has a seating capacity of over 1,000 and during its seven years run as a vaudeville house became a popular Edmonton institution. It is the announced intention of the new management to show only the best in pictures, specializing in big featured productions....[75]

Thus ended the halcyon days of Pantages vaudeville in Edmonton. The Metropolitan operated as a movie house until the end of 1921, when assorted stock companies performed plays there until 1923, the year that Pantages vaudeville returned.

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[73] Bulletin, July 26, 1921.

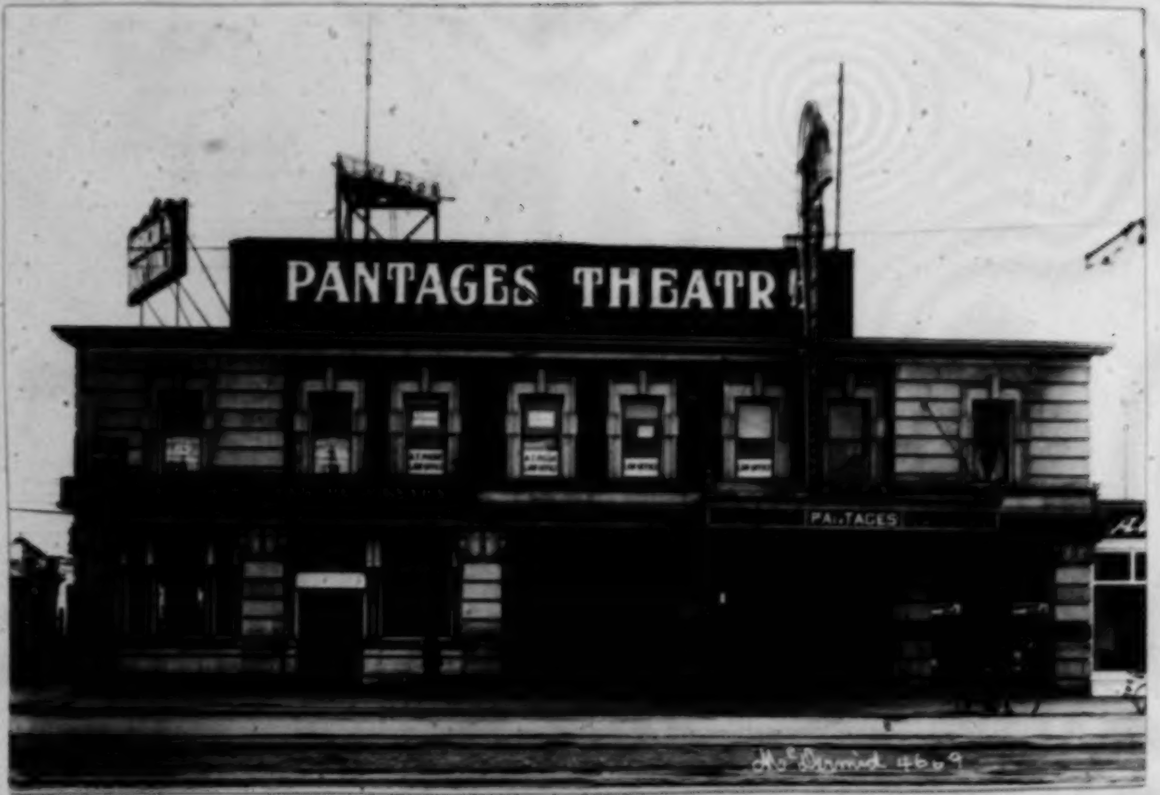
[74] Crane, p. 502.

[75] Bulletin, September 2, 1921.

Meanwhile, Edmonton had lost its air of boom-town and had settled down to the day-to-day business of being a small but significant city. The population had actually decreased from 72,516 in 1914 to 58,821 by 1921.[76] Vaudeville had lost much of its former glitter as cinema became the dominant entertainment form. But it remains that the colour and excitement of Pantages vaudeville provided Edmontonians from 1913 to 1921 with the same popular entertainment as was witnessed in the larger North American centres. Edmonton's own "vaudeville palace" had been erected as an extension of one man's empire -- hardly to directly facilitate the cultural needs or wants of a growing city. The elaborate interior was the perfect setting in which Edmonton could join the ranks of North American popular entertainment, and become a homogeneous part of the vaudeville experience.

[76] City Census, 1914 and Dominion Census, 1921.

ILLUSTRATIONS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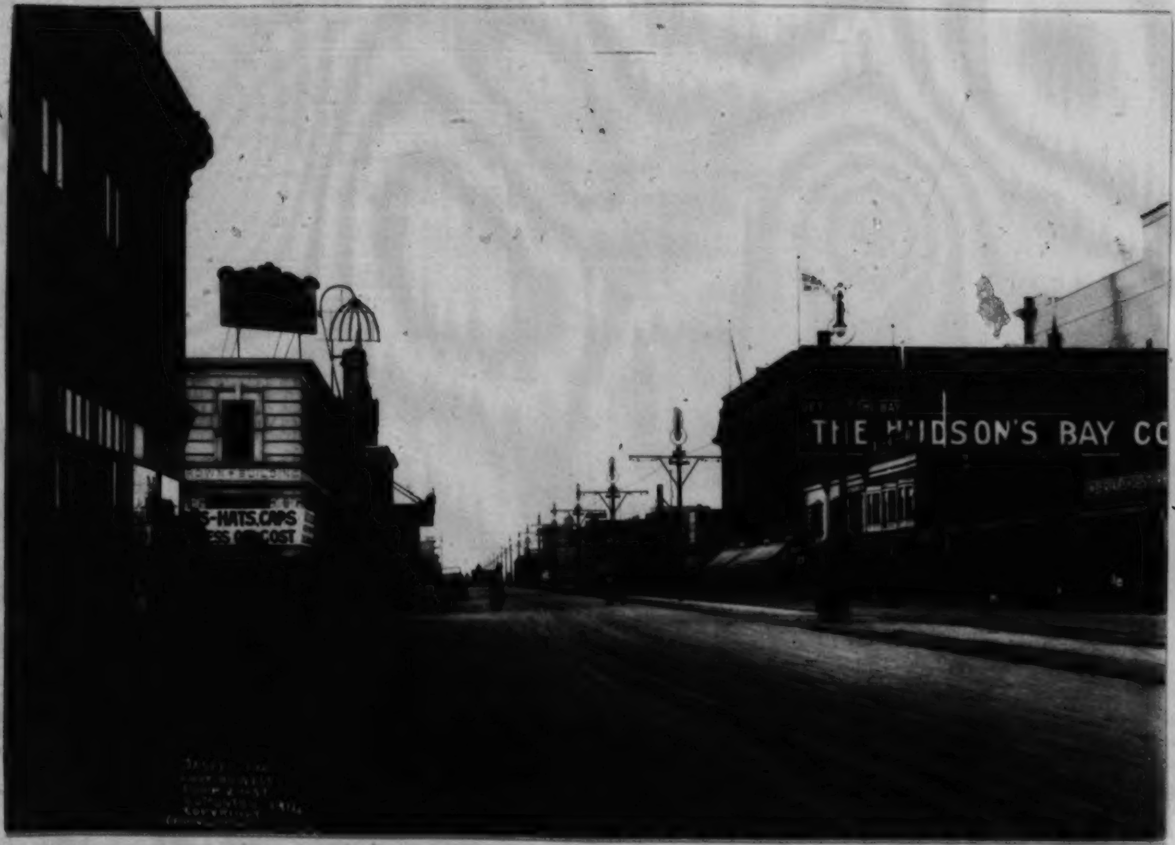
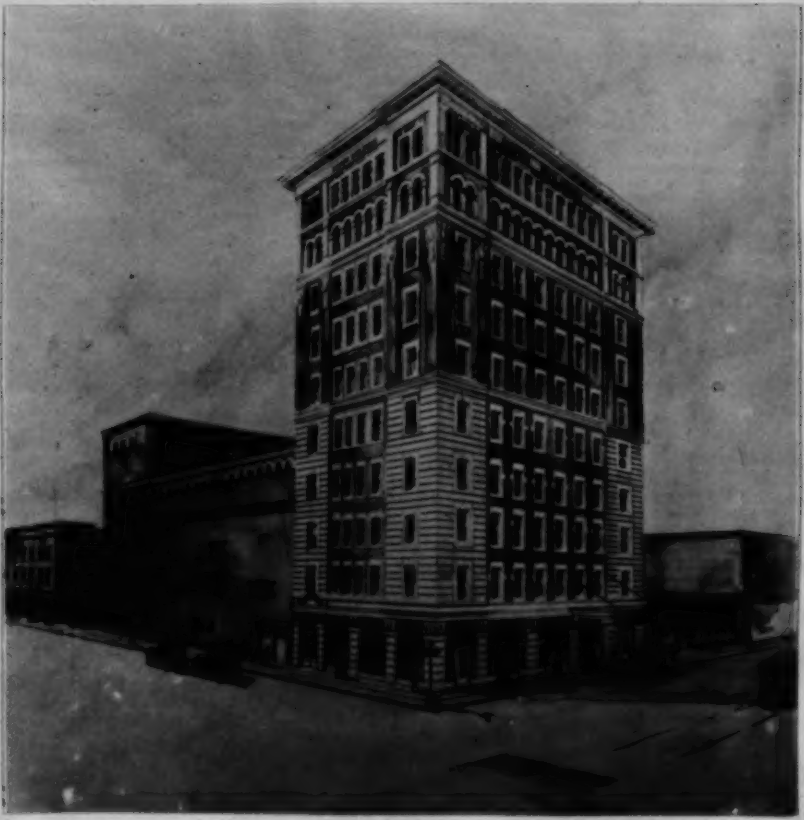
1. Pantages Theatre, 1919. Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary, Alberta.


THE HUDSON'S BAY CO
HATS, CAPS

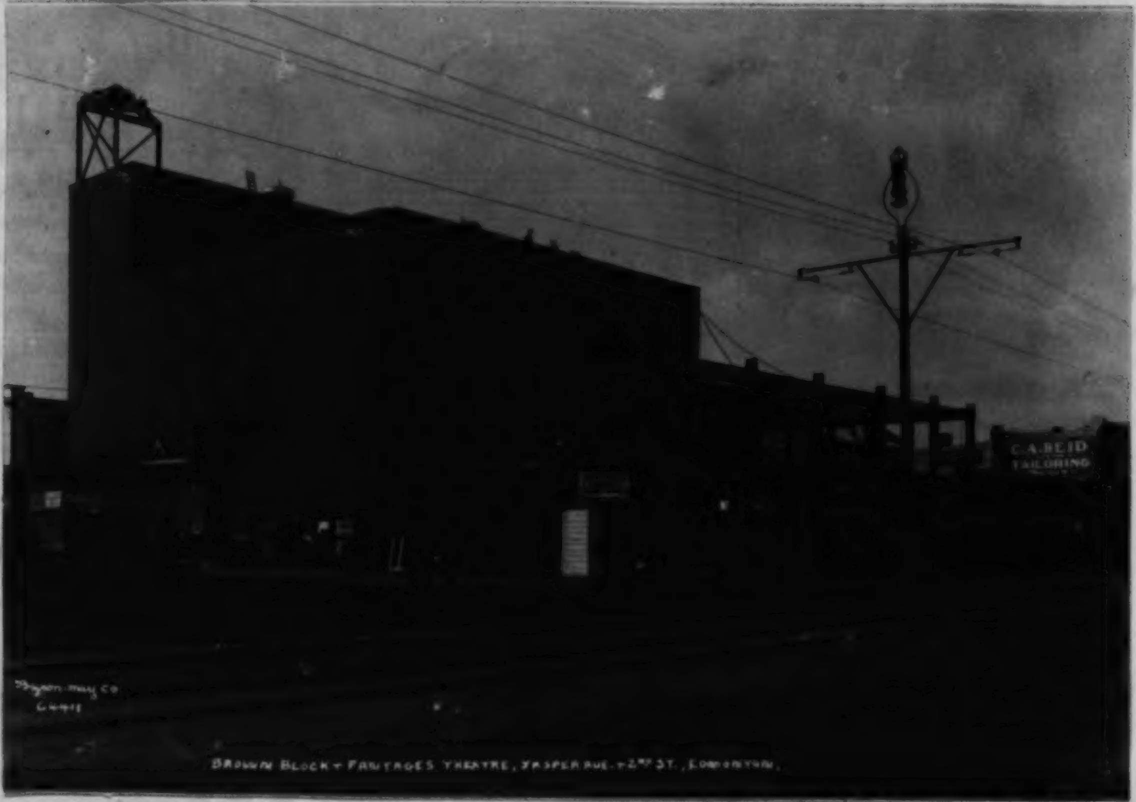
2. Jasper Avenue, looking west from 102nd Street, 1914.

Provincial Archives of Alberta.



3. Architect's rendering of Brown Block, c. 1912.
The building never did extend beyond two storeys.

Glenbow-Alberta Institute.


C.A. REID TAILORING
Byron-May Co.
BROWN BLOCK + PANTAGES THEATRE, JASPER AVE. + 2ND ST., EDMONTON.

4. Brown Block under construction, May, 1913. Provincial Archives of Alberta.

5. Alexander Pantages, c. 1913.

Glenbow-Alberta Institute.

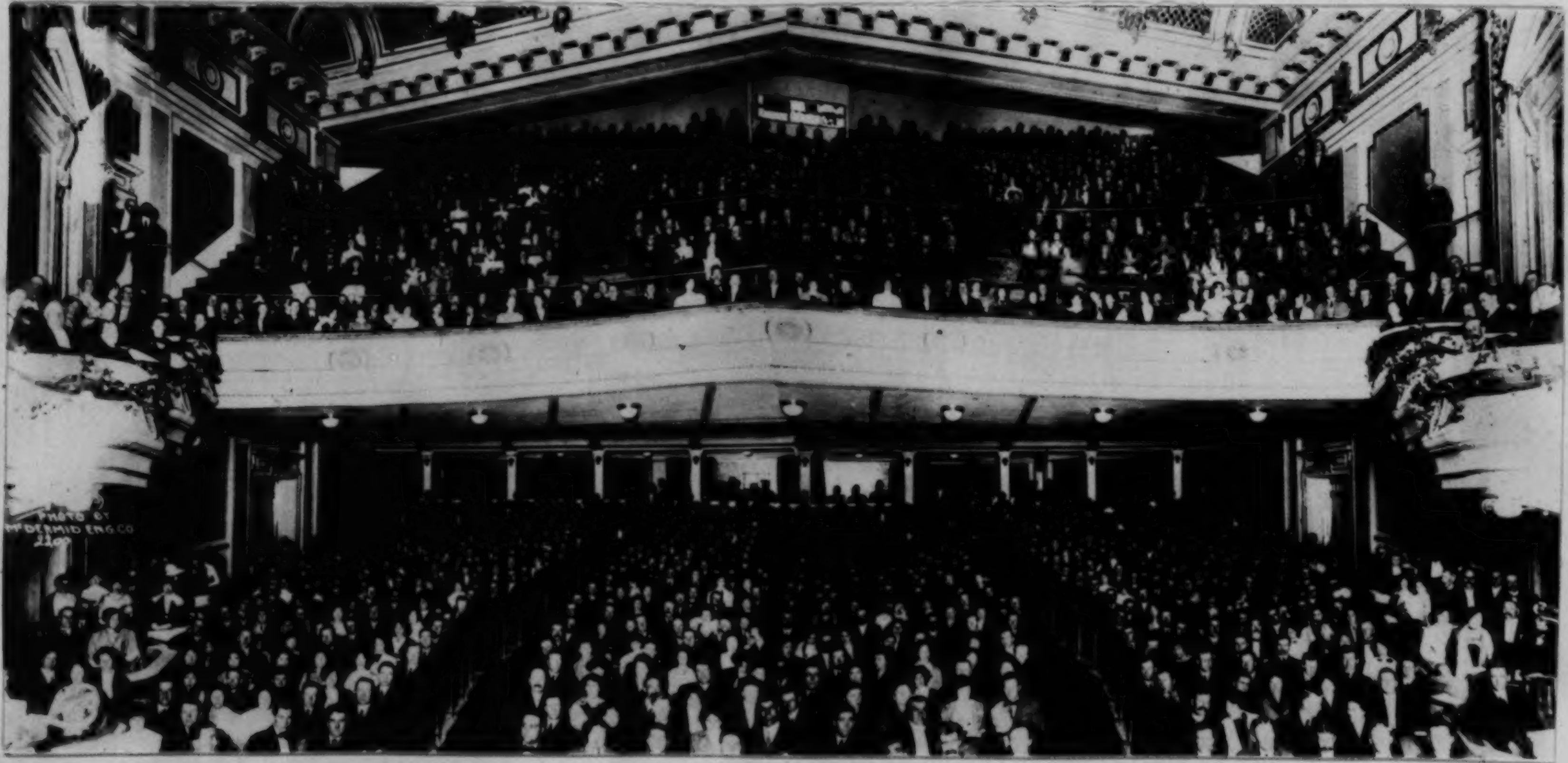
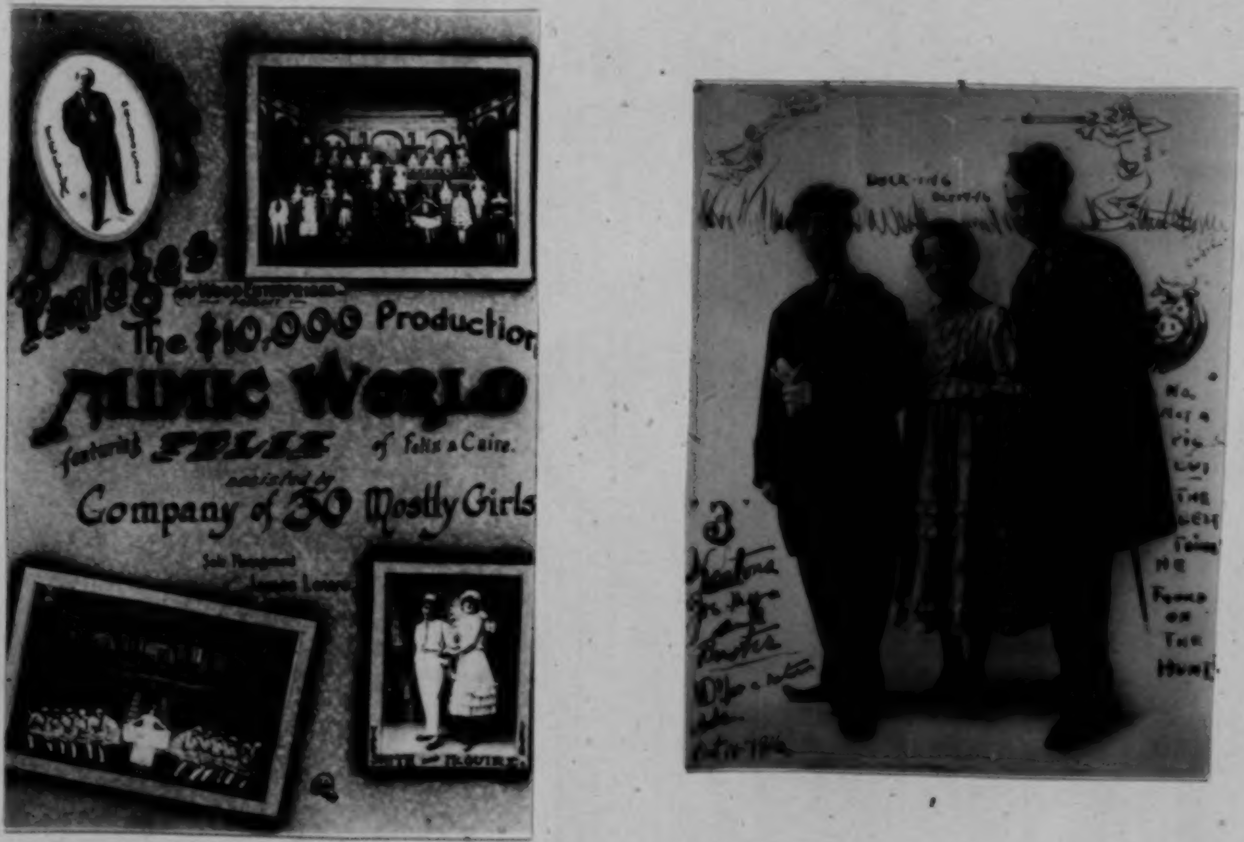


PHOTO BY
McDERMID ENG. CO
2200

6. Opening Night at the Pantages Theatre, May 12, 1913. Glenbow-Alberta Institute.

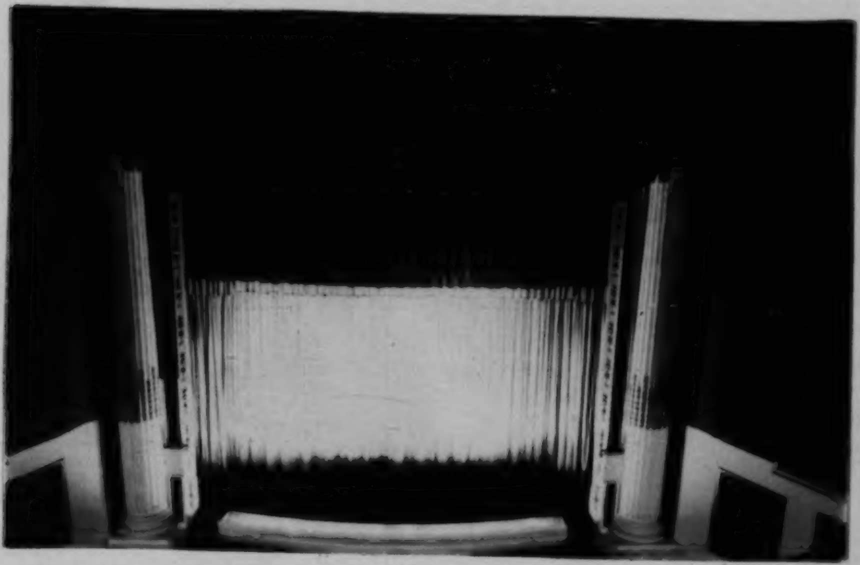
7. Pantages Drop Curtain and Orchestra.

City of Edmonton Archives.


Pantages
The $10,000 Production
Mimic World
featuring Felix of Felix & Caire.
assisted by
Company of 30 Mostly Girls
3 Keatons
NO, NOT A PIG BUT THE BEST THING HE FOUND ON THE HUNT

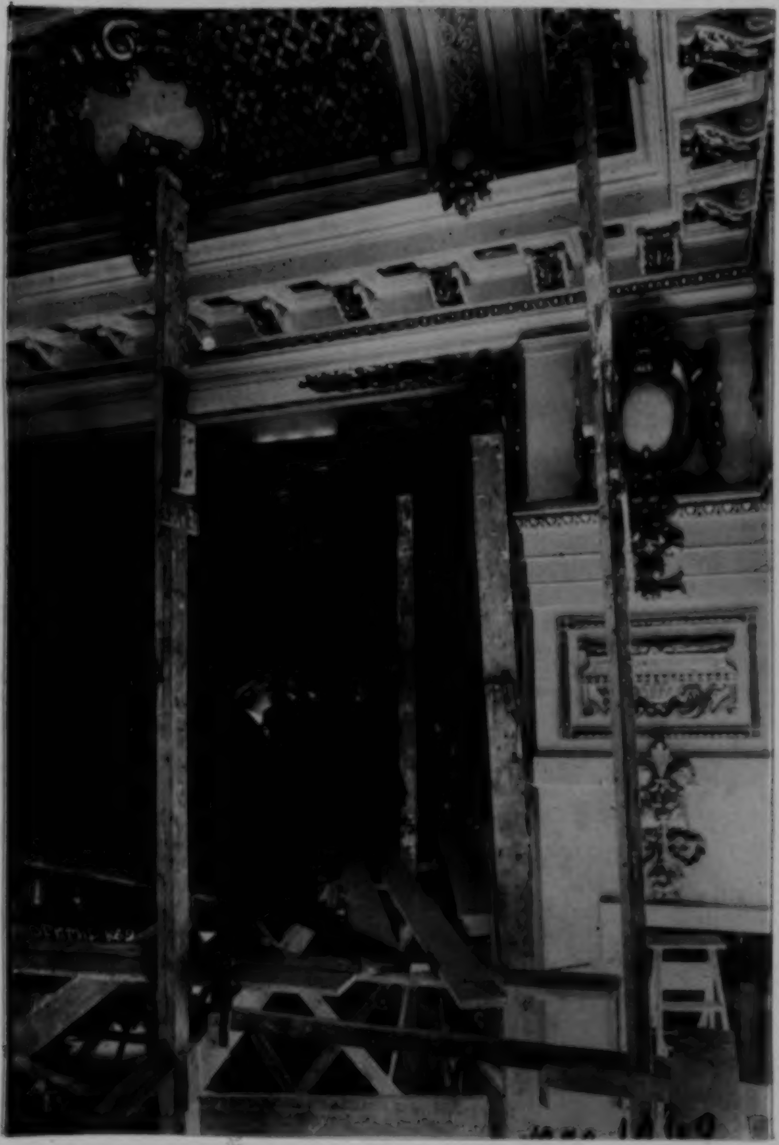
8. (a) Pantages Promotional Postcard, 1914. (b) The Keatons, 1916.

Provincial Archives of Alberta, Rice Collection.



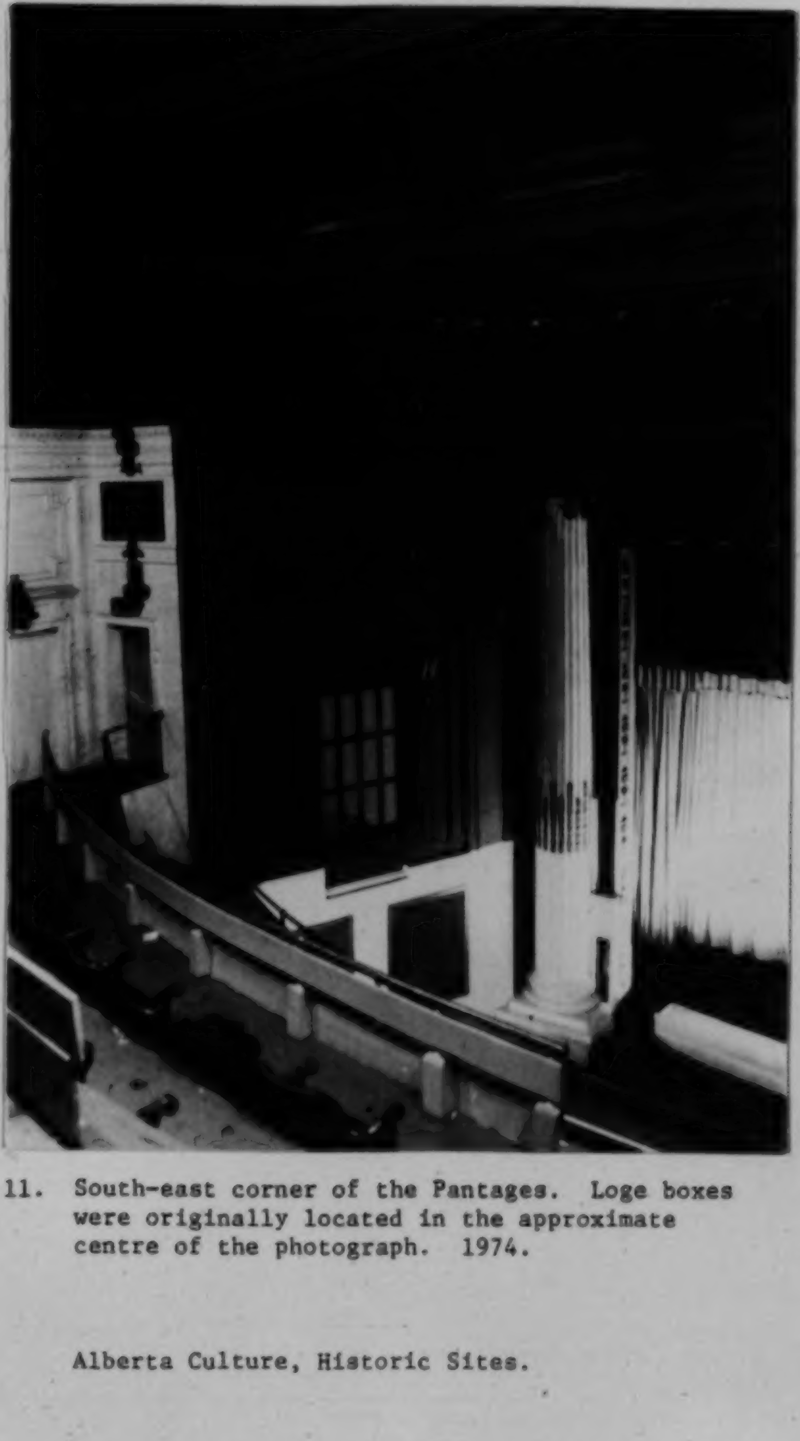
9. (a) & (b) Proscenium Arch and Medallion Detail, 1974.

Alberta Culture, Historic Sites.



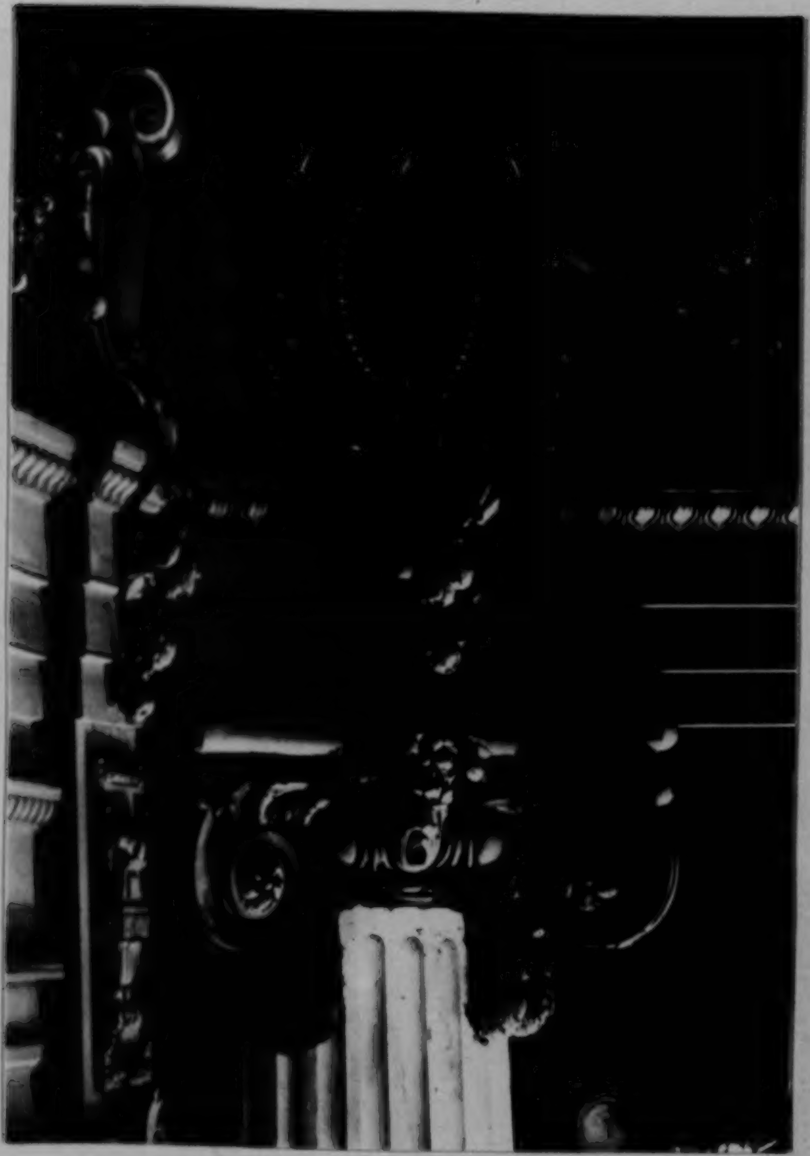
10. Inspection of Plasterwork, unidentified gentlemen, c. 1913

Glenbow-Alberta Institute.



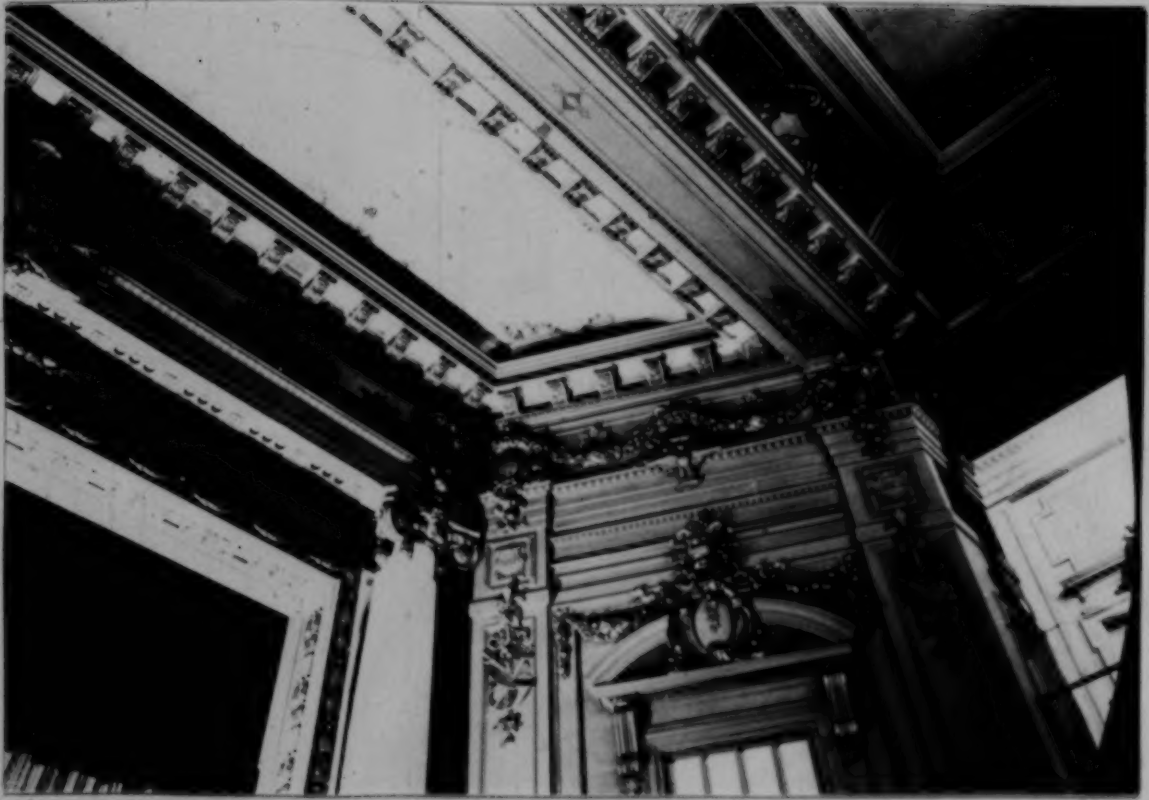
11. South-east corner of the Pantages. Loge boxes were originally located in the approximate centre of the photograph. 1974.

Alberta Culture, Historic Sites.



12. Detail of plasterwork above east proscenium column. 1974.

Alberta Culture, Historic Sites.



13. South-west corner of Pantages, showing recessed lighting panels in ceiling. 1974.

Alberta Culture, Historic Sites.

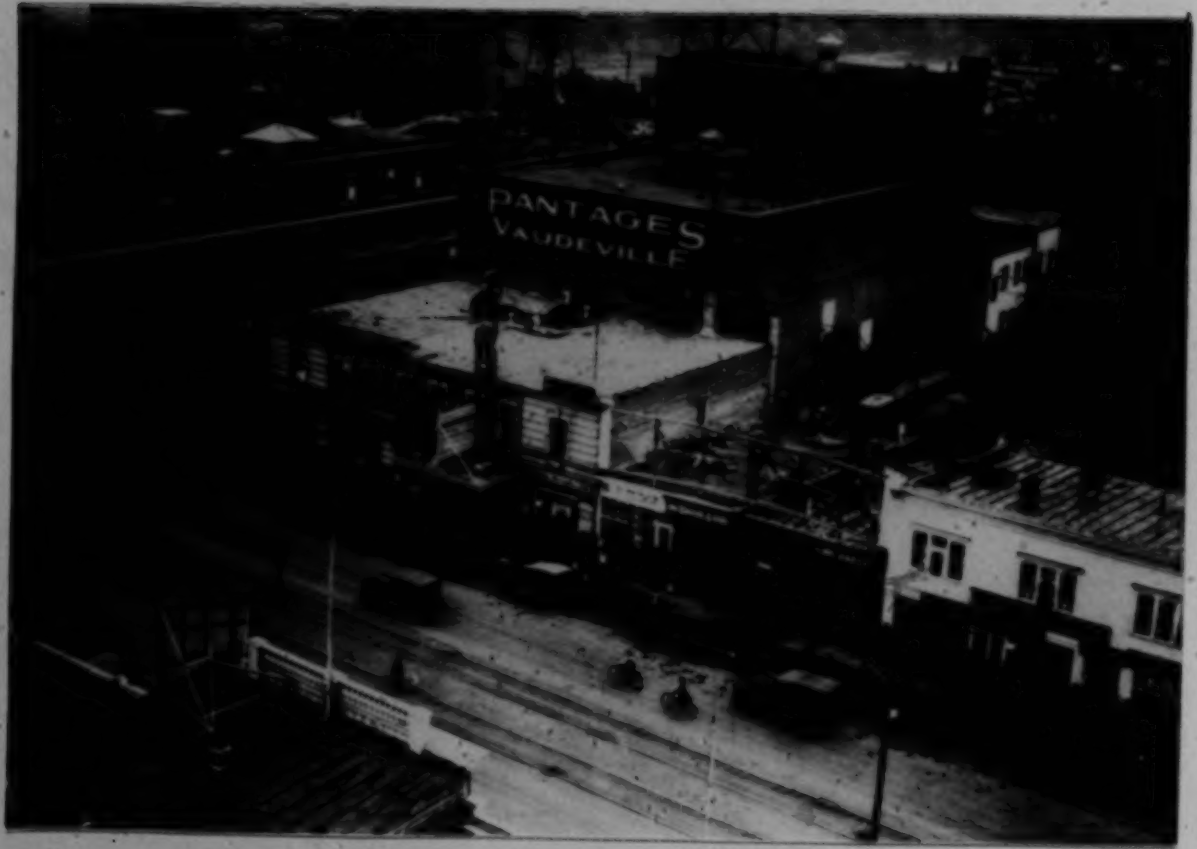
14. (a) Hemp rope fly system at stage level, 1974.

Alberta Culture, Historic Sites.

NO SMOKING
BY ORDER
FIRE MARSHALL

(b) Original lighting board, 1974.

Alberta Culture, Historic Sites.


PANTAGES
VAUDEVILLE

15. Pantages Theatre, March 10, 1923. City of Edmonton Archives.

III

ARCHITECTURE AND DECOR OF THE EDMONTON PANTAGES THEATRE

Elaborate emporiums of entertainment were a common commodity in virtually every North American city by 1913. Edmonton's largest vaudeville palace, the Pantages, had the most seating capacity (1,600), and had by far the most elaborately decorated theatre auditorium ever built in this city.

Brown hired E.C. Hopkins, who designed an exterior that was relatively plain, if not pedestrian, in comparison to the theatre interior. (The simple design of the Brown Block exterior may have been a means of keeping the building's budget under control, and possibly there were plans to dress the building up in the years following its construction.) The Pantages Theatre occupied most of the Brown Block on the corner of 102nd and Jasper; from 1913 to 1921 the theatre shared the building with the Ross-Greenleese Co., the Shasta Restaurant (an ill-fated forefunner of the American Dairy Lunch which opened in 1914), The Edmonton Cigar Store, the Standard Bank of Canada, Anna McDermott, a milliner, the Dolly Dimple Candy Shop, and in 1921 the D'Allaird Manufacturing Co. Ltd..[1] However, the lobby of the theatre, with its mosaictiled floor, and twin marble staircases provided a suitable point of departure from the rather mundane buildings of Jasper Avenue.

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[1] Henderson's Edmonton City Directory, 1913-1921.

Shortly before the Pantages opened, the Bulletin described some of the theatre's features:

> In the main part of the theatre, or where the audience will be seated, there are no huge posts to mar the view of the spectator. The [stage] draperies of the house will be somewhat similar in color with the general color scheme. They will be of a deep gold color, trimmed with hand woven embroideries.
>
> A system of indirect lighting for the entire auditorium has been installed.
>
> The heating of the Pantages Theatre will be done under the Twin Fan system. Adjacent to the foyer is a large and comfortably furnished men's smoking room and the ladies and children will have a handsomely fitted parlor at their disposal. The performers and employees will find their labors lighter on account of the new appliances installed for their convenience. The dressing rooms are large and well lighted and have marble dressing tables and dainty fixtures.[2]

The loge boxes, three on each side, ascended to the front of the upper mezzanine, which was a promenade area slightly below and leading to the balcony. It is likely that the Edmonton theatre was the first Pantages house to have a mezzanine[3] (on opening night chairs were placed there to accommodate the overflow). The back rows of the balcony were frequently referred to unceremoniously as "nigger's heaven";[4] these seats were the furthest from the stage and therefore the cheapest in the house.

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[2] Bulletin, May 10, 1913.

[3] Terry Helgesen, "B. Marcus Priteca 180-1971, The Last of the Giants", Marquee, vol. 4, no. 2, Second Quarter, 1972, p. 3.

The most impressive and memorable architectural aspect of the Pantages was its elaborate ivory and gilt plasterwork. The nine metre high by twelve metre wide proscenium arch had on each side a Corinthian fluted column topped with twin gilded scrolls. Gilt leaf designs decorated the lower half of each column. Above the centre of the proscenium hung a large medallion with two crossed swords and a "lamp of learning". (See plate 9.) Much of the plasterwork detail did not immediately meet the eye; cleverly disguised directly below the proscenium medillion was a mask, which peered down over the orchestra in an expression of "tears and laughter."[5] (Two other plaster faces appeared in the theatre, and these rested atop the arches above the loge boxes.) A horizontal design forming the top of the proscenium was a miniaturized version of the symmetrical cornice garlands.

The cornice garland borders reinforce the overall symmetry of the total design. Ending just before the balcony, the cornice motif consisted of cartouches -- ovolos surrounded with elaborate scrolls -- which were joined by garlands with floral and fruit stylings. (See plates 11 and 12.)

Medallions above the loge entrances were topped with modified fleur de lis, while small painted portraits were tucked amid rectangular panels placed high on the mezzanine and balcony walls. Practically every design element had its own border; borders throughout the auditorium include delicate ovals, overlapping scrolls, modified Greek-key designs and rectangular relief frames.

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[4] Almost every senior citizen interviewed for this project recalled this term for the balcony.

[5] Arthur Irving, "Past, Present and Future", unpublished M.S., 1966, City of Vancouver Archives, p. 7.
This mask may have been a trademark of Priteca, the designer, as it was also over the proscenium of the Vancouver Pantages.

The ceiling consisted of panels of lattice plasterwork; these panels bordered the mezzanine-balcony area while repeating the cornice cartouche design. Two stained art-glass panels, which were recessed in the main ceiling between the mezzanine and stage area and over the balcony, lit the auditorium. This supplied a soft, indirect light, thereby eliminating the problem of glare while Edmontonians enjoyed the Pantages vaudeville entertainment. (See plate 13.)

To relieve the eye, rectangular panels containing relatively simple geometric designs appear throughout the auditorium. Decorative plaster pieces adorned virtually every interior structural surface of the auditorium, and at least sixty individual molding designs together constitute the overall effect.[6] However, the sheer mass and weight of the ornate plaster work did not constitute an overwhelming interior design; the overall impression was that of spaciousness, lightness and exotic grandeur. To subdue the effect of the predominantly ivory expanse of plaster work, the walls of the auditorium entrances and the area under the loge boxes were covered in wine-red damask silk. The silk was repeated in panels on the mezzanine and balcony walls. The ivory and gold of the plasterwork combined with the silk wall-covering and indirect lighting created a "soft old rose tint" in the Pantages auditorium.[7]

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[6] Before the building was demolished, the author counted over sixty separate molding designs, most of which were repeated. It was very difficult to isolate each design due to their abundance, so this figure must remain approximate.

Other features included seventy-foot high backdrops from New York, plush carpets, an elaborate stage lighting system, and "automatic" red plush folding chairs.[8] The gentlemen's smoking room and the parlor for ladies and children were located on the main floor just off the lobby.

The stage itself was fairly shallow; stage dimensions were approximately 5.5 metres deep by 11.5 metres long. Because of the "on-off" nature of vaudeville-variety, and dependence on stage drops for scenic effects rather than set pieces, stage depth was not crucial. Vaudeville managers also probably preferred to sacrifice stage depth in order to crowd in more seats. Vaudeville palaces also tended to have a large seating capacity, and therefore performers tended to play downstage for greater visibility and audibility. This, of course, was necessary in the days before electronic sound equipment.

Over the stage, extending upwards above and behind the two-storey Brown Block and another half-storey above the theatre itself was the fly tower. The interior fly gallery was a complex network

[7] Bulletin, May 10, 1913.

[8] Ibid.

of metal capable of supporting the required backdrops plus a massive asbestos free-drop fire curtain. Fire regulations were stringent at the time of the erection of the Pantages, so it comes as no surprise that the theatre was outfitted with twelve fire exits. The journalistic puffery which surrounded the opening of the Pantages described the building as being constructed with "absolute fireproof material,"[9] and an account is given about a sprinkler system installed in the roof supplied with water from 5,000 gallon capacity tanks,[10] but these measures were made mandatory in the theatre construction codes of the period.[11]

It is possibly of no surprise that the writer found a photograph of the Pantages Theatre interior incorrectly catalogue in an archival collection as the Legislature Building. While many theatres in Europe contained stylings normally reserved for cathedrals or state buildings, some North American pleasure palaces incorporated elaborate architectural designs. The Edmonton Pantages Theatre is a prime example of this trend in twentieth-century prestigious theatre architecture. While viewing the writer's collection of photographs of the Edmonton Pantages, local architect Peter MacLellan commented that: "...somebody had a lot of faith..." in erecting such an elaborate and large theatre in what was a relatively small frontier city.[12]

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[9] Bulletin, May 10, 1913.

[10] Orrell, p. 110.

[11] Willaim H. Birkmire, The Planning and Construction of American Theatres (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1907), pp. 109, 114.

The Edmonton Pantages was among the first of a series of theatres designed by B. Marcus Priteca for Alexander Pantages. The Scottish-born Priteca developed a style known as "Pantages Greek" of which Pantages himself was enamoured with,[13] and as a result most of the Pantages theatres resembled one another in terms of over-all design. The Los Angeles Pantages built in 1920 looks like a larger and more expensive version of the Edmonton house; there are the same Corinthian columns bordering the proscenium, and the three loge boxes stagger up on either side towards a mezzanine and have the same off-the-balcony entrances. Bearing even greater resemblance to the Edmonton Pantages is the house in Vancouver. Built in 1917, it looks almost as if the same plaster molds were used; there is even the same grinning face placed dead-centre on the proscenium arch.

In 1911, Pantages was posed with an architectural problem regarding his San Francisco theatre. Like Edmonton's Pantages, the theatre was to be built in an office building and the design objective was to create a lobby and theatre which would not disrupt the other businesses. While delivering some material to another architectural firm, Priteca met Pantages who asked the young architect how he felt this difficulty could be overcome. Priteca

[12] Peter MacLennan. Personal Interview. February 3, 1983.

[13] Helgesen, p. 3.

ultimately designed the theatre, and thus began his career at age 21 as principle architect for the Pantages playhouses.[14]

Priteca's theatres were all large houses, ranging from occupancy of 1,300 to 2,300,[15] and those designed by him shared characteristic features:

> In each theatre the balcony was entered from both sides of the auditorium by means of a cross aisle which separated the second and third sections. The loges were placed lower, in front of a wall that separated them from the first section of regular seats. They were entered from special little stairways at the extreme sides of the auditorium, behind the upper stage box entrances. In addition to access the stairways permitted additional standing room just behind the loge boxes -- a practical idea in those days of packed theatres.[16]

Architectural features found in the Edmonton theatre and other Priteca designs included the recessed stained art-glass panels which provided indirect lighting and downstairs dressing rooms. Evidently all the Priteca Pantages theatre were designed with "...perfect sight lines and excellent acoustics."[17]

Having designed all of Pantages' theatres from 1911 to 1930 (the last being the Hollywood Pantages),[18] Priteca referred to Pantages as a "tremendous man" in terms of business, a man who was

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[14] Helgesen, p. 3.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

"brilliant, acute, a good judge of people, with a phenominal memory for facts."[19]

Priteca received many architectural awards, and was the only theatre architect prior to 1971 to be honored by the American Institute of Architects. He has been described as a pioneer in American theatre architecture, and devoted much of his career to the perfection of auditorium site-lines, acoustics and stage mechanics, along with designing improvements for air-conditioning and fire and panic prevention.[20] Before his death in 1971,[21] many of Priteca's theatres went the way of the demolition ball. Only a handful survive today; the Tacoma Pantages underwent extensive renovations during the summer of 1981, and the Winnipeg theatre now serves the community as a live theatre. Priteca admitted as being "disgustedly reconciled" when hearing of the destruction of his work and wondered whether it was better or not to outlive his designs.[22] But the theatre-goers who enjoyed Pantages vaudeville will remember the designer for his fanciful interpretations of Italian Renaissance stylings which embellished the Pantages vaudeville palaces.

Priteca's use of materials and motifs characteristic of public buildings from Vienna to Venice is a manifestation of the

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[19] Saloutos, p. 146 (interview with Priteca, 1963).

[20] From the files of the American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C.

[21] Helgesen, p. 10.

[22] Arthur Irving, p. 7.

North American belief in progress and the hope for material success. Architecturally, the Edmonton Pantages borrowed the most obvious and grand design elements from Europe's established architecture. The Pantages was hardly designed and built as a shrine to the Baroque period; rather, it fulfilled a symbolic promise for early twentieth century audiences for wealth and position. Financed, managed, and designed by three relative new-comers to North America (Brown,[23] Pantages, and Priteca), Europe's cathedral stylings were transplanted to Edmonton for the purposes of secular amusement. The theatre and its elaborate trappings were a testimony to the possibilities an uneducated and poor immigrant had in the New World; the Pantages circuit was completely owned and operated by one such man. Alexander Pantages himself was a personification of the myth of success in the land of milk and honey. For the price of a ticket, the opulent setting which enhanced the excitement and tinsel of vaudeville was available to recent immigrant and resident Edmontonians alike.

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[23] Brown was born in Athens, Greece, and came to Edmonton in 1910.
Men and Makers of Edmonton (Edmonton: Keystone Press, 1913).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE VAUDEVILLE EXPERIENCE

In his book American Vaudeville, Douglas Gilbert defines vaudeville as "...the theatre of its people."[1] All theatre is inherently "of its people"; theatre provides a vehicle in which a given people, or culture, can express social or political attitudes and ethics, even conflict and change. Vaudeville afforded the opportunity for a society at large to identify with itself in terms of the "New World". Variety-vaudeville was a fluid form which could shift and mold to accommodate the current attitudes and trends of its audiences.

The origin of the term "vaudeville" seems as difficult to define as the form itself is, but there exists two prevailing theories. One possibility is the "chansons du Vau" or "du Val de Vire", which were drinking songs of the Normans satirizing the English who invaded the Vire River Valley.[2] Alternatively, the French phrase "voix de ville", meaning "songs of the city streets", may have been condensed later into one word.[3] Intermezzi, which were short comic interludes separating acts of opera, were known as "pieces en vaudeville", and by the mid-nineteenth century "vaudeville" came to mean variety performances on the English music hall stage.[4] The first theatre calling itself a vaudeville house opened in New York in 1840.[5] By the early 1880's Tony Pastor, whose Opera House in New York became the first family-oriented variety theatre, had taken variety out of the saloons and turned it into an entertainment which "...ladies and children could attend without embarrassment."[6] The average Pastor bill included approximately thirty-five performers, who did "...songs, dances, acrobatics, mimicry, dramatic and burlesque sketches in rapid succession."[7]

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[1] Douglas Gilbert, American Vaudeville (New York: Whittlesey House, 1940), p. 3.

[2] Bernard Sobel, A Pictorial History of Vaudeville (New York: Citadel Press, 1961), p. 17.

[3] Ibid.

By 1910 America had 2,000 vaudeville houses scattered across the country, most of which were "small-time."[8] B.F. Keith and his partner E.F. Albee[9] controlled the pinnacle of vaudeville entertainment in the form of New York's Palace Theatre. The first decade of the twentieth century saw the rise of vaudeville as the most popular of all staged entertainments.

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[4] Sobel, p. 18.

[5] _Ibid_., p. 22.

[6] _Ibid_., p. 40.

[7] _Ibid_., p. 44.

[8] Green and Laurie Jr., p. 4

[9] Playwright Edward Albee, of _The American Dream_ and _Zoo Story_ fame, is the adopted grandson of vaudeville manager E.F. Albee.
Phyllis Hartnoll, ed. _The Oxford Companion to the Theatre_ (London: University of London Press, 1975), p. 17.

> It was a great sprawling era, that of the 1900's, geyserish in effort, fulsome in tone, hilarious and jerky; and into this picture vaudeville fitted like the final piece of a jigsaw puzzle -- a setup for Edward Franklin Albee and his partner, Benjamine Franklin Keith, who were to become vaudeville's most dominant characters. They made of entertainment a specialized, regimented industry; were products of their time...[10]

As was the case with Keith and Albee, and the smaller circuit managers like Pantages, the taste-makers were also the money-makers.

Vaudeville incorporated elements from nineteenth-century amusements, including the legitimate stage and British music hall.[11] Paralleling its European roots that go back to the circus, court entertainers and commedia dell'arte, vaudeville artists were itinerant, controlled only by the circuit managers and owners. Thus, centuries-old European entertainment traditions became transplanted to America in the form of a profitable, yet "respectable" family entertainment. Although vaudeville borrowed liberally from established theatre traditions, it was quick to establish its own characteristics, and it was always receptive to its audiences who demanded the latest novelty in entertainment trends. Vaudeville developed from old established theatre conventions, but ultimately it established its own tradition.

Vaudeville even developed its own language, a terminology used to define characteristics of the form. An act could appear as a "head-liner, middle-liner, or bottom-liner", while a bill could include "extra added attractions" sometimes "held over by popular demand". A "serio-comic" was an actor skilled in both comedy and tragedy, and song-writers were known as "words and music men". Vaudevillians aspired to "wow" or "panic" the audience, or better yet, to "knock them off their seats". Conversely, actors lived in fear of "doing a Brodie", or to undergo the wrath of having "flopped", "flivved", or "busted". A vaudevillian, or "two-a-day-trouper", was a creature distinct from an actor of the "legit" stage, and a vaudeville "hoofer" and "warbler" (dancer and singer) maintained a separate identity from the "gauze fluffers" of classical ballet. It follows that a special language and lingo would have been developed for a new, yet highly specialized and distinctive theatre expression.[12]

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[10] Gilbert, p. 198.

[11] Albert F. McLean Jr., American Vaudeville as Ritual (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), p. 16.

However, certain words and phrases were definitely not permitted in vaudeville's stage terminology. Realizing that "family amusements" were their bread and butter, vaudeville managers laid down the law as far as vulgarity was concerned. Joe Laurie Jr. lists some words and bits of stage business which were ordered cut from comedians' vaudeville acts. Included are: the words "dirty" or "cockeye", the name of the American President, or any state, city or national official, the word "hell", all reference to "the little cottage behind the big one", reference to a woman as a "broad", business of looking skyward and then brushing top of hat, reference to Protestants (possibly because of the Methodist push for prohibition), and the line "That was when Fanny was a girl's name".[13] Thus, vaudeville was designed to appeal to even those of the most delicate sensibilities; there is no apparent evidence of Pantages vaudeville in Edmonton ever being labelled as anything but "acceptable" family entertainment.

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[12] McLean, p. 63.

The Edmonton Pantages Theatre was even used as an emergency church when All Saints Anglican Cathedral burned to the ground in 1920. The organ in the theatre permitted choral services, whereby "...everyone was delighted."[14] However, when citizen groups in Seattle began to demand the closure of theatres on Sundays, Pantages saw his theatres as sanctuaries for the bored:

> ...If people, especially young people, don't have the theatre to go to on Sunday, what they going to do? Go some place else. And I tell you there is more protection and more safety in theatres than in some other places.
>
> People come to my theatres Sunday afternoon and stay all afternoon. I know the people, the working people. Sometimes I say to them, Bill or Francis, if you don't go to the theatre Sunday, what you going to do? And they say, "Nothing, there is nothing to do." You see, they want it.
>
> Look at Vancouver and Victoria. They don't keep open Sunday and see! No dramatic companies play there except one night stands...
>
> Without Sunday we could not afford the high class European vaudeville acts we have now.[15]

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[13] Joe Laurie Jr., pp. 288-292.

[14] All Saints Anglican Cathedral Anniversary Booklet, 1875-1975, Edmonton, Alberta.

[15] Seattle Times, "Court Thinks Sunday Theatre is Necessary", July 26, 1908.

Just as vaudeville transplanted European entertainment forms into America, most of vaudeville's audience consisted of transplanted Europeans. The rush of immigrants into the New World quickened the pulse of many Canadian and American cities. Edmonton's population more than doubled in two years, from 30,500 in 1911 (including Strathcona), to 63,000 in 1913.[16] The Edmonton Pantages Theatre could accommodate 1,600, and assuming it played at 60% capacity two shows a day, seven days a week, 21% of Edmonton's total population experienced Pantages vaudeville on a regular basis. (And when one considers that the Pantages was not the only show in town, the number of theatre-goers in the City was conceivably much greater.) Vaudeville did not cater to any specific age or social class; vaudeville was designed for everyone, and virtually everyone went:

> The audience consisted of doctors, lawyers, even rich bankers, side by side with urchins from the street, race-track louts, day laborers and honest farmers, with a few dollars in their pockets from the sale of vegetables to the wholesale men.[17]

Realizing that people tend to follow the path of least resistance, Pantages located his theatres in downtown areas, usually close to other theatres, "...on the theory that if they could get crowds, so could he."[18] A fundamental difference between American vaudeville and British music hall was the location of the theatres. The latter were scattered about London, with the plush Alhambra in Leicester Square, the modest music halls being in modest parts of the city down to the decrepit houses in the slums.[19] Possibly due to the rapid growth of North American centres, the downtown area remained an identifiable core of a city, used for both business and entertainment. The Brown Block in Edmonton provided the city with a bonafide urban entertainment centre, housing both the Pantages and the American Dairy Lunch. George Spillios and Harry Lingas purchased the ill-fated Shasta Grill, which was so "classy and expensive" that it went under within a month.[20] (See plate 2.) Spillios and Langas converted the restaurant into Edmonton's first cafeteria (many Edmontonians today have fond memories of the gargoyle-like Czech wine gods that bordered the walls below the ceiling). Tony Cashman points out in his reminiscences of early Edmonton that "...in all the Pantages' years as a vaudeville house, the American Dairy Lunch was part of the show."[21]

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[16] Dominion Census, 1911, and Edmonton Henderson's Directory, 1914.

[17] "Vaudeville - a Sketch", Washington Magazine, September 1906, pp. 31-32.

[18] Elliot, p. 63.

It perhaps is no coincidence that vaudeville was in its heyday when thousands were flocking to Canada and America, and by 1906 new arrivals in Alberta were tending to settle in urban, rather than rural areas.[22] Many new arrivals had not yet learned the

[19] McLean, p. 34.

[20] Tony Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 245.

[21] *Ibid*.

[22] James G. MacGregor, A History of Alberta (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1981), p. 209.

language or codes of conduct for the New World; vaudeville provided the ideal vehicle with which to make a rather pleasant and expedient transition from the old culture into the new. Vaudeville was hardly a literary form; rather, it relied upon lavish use of color, sound and broad gesture to get its message across the footlights. Alexander Pantages' own lack of fluency in the English language may have been one of his greatest assets when he composed bills that would be both interesting and intelligible to recent immigrants. Each bill contained enough "dumb acts"[23] to entertain the English-deficient, and even the playlets, most of which were minature musicals, could be appreciated for their flash and glitter.

The Bulletin announced in 1913 that Edmonton's vaudeville patrons desired more from the "legitimate" stage:

> The constant growth in the popularity of vaudeville is making an ever-increasing demand for one-act plays of artistic merit and either dramatic or musical worth.[24]

This appeal seems to exist in direct opposition to the broad sense of appeal which vaudeville aspired to, yet when one understands the "formula" adhered to by one-act plays for the vaudeville stage, a mastery of the English language is hardly required to follow the action. Frank Pixley, author of many musical playlets of the period, gives advice for budding dramatists for the vaudeville stage:

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[23] "Dumb acts" were acts without dialogue, such as acrobatic acts.

[24] Bulletin, May 6, 1913.

> The first thing is to write a scenario, an analysis of your piece - the skeleton of your play, in which you outline the whole. This forms a kind of sailing chart. Then after you have formulated your story you must settle your characters. You see, it's much like making a plum pudding; first you mix your pudding and then drop in the raisons. Of course, you must have a prima donna who is a good singer - and if she is good looking and a good actress so much the better, but she must be a good singer...You must also have a tenor. Nobody but a tenor can ever make love to a prima donna. You must have comedians and there must be foils for him, for he can't be funny alone. Then there is usually a soubrette, and sometimes an ingenue to develop the story. Your funny man may be a tramp or a king - anything you choose - but he must be there.[25]

With its abundance of stock characters and situations, even vaudeville playlets could be easily discernable to the English-deaf. Conceptual thought, or idea, was hardly the motivating force behind vaudeville playlets; broad dramatic action cloaked in elaborate costumes, sets and a plot which was by and large motivated by music constituted an important ingredient in the vaudeville experience.

Albert F. McLean, in his book American Vaudeville as Ritual, defines vaudeville as being more than an "expression of the American spirit", nor, does he say, was vaudeville simply a valve for emotional energy.[26] Seeing vaudeville as ritual, it was a part of the process of myth creation, particularly that of the American Dream. With its heavy reliance on wit and glitter, with wealth and glamour

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[25] Bulletin, July 26, 1913.

[26] McLean, p. viii.

(as manifested in opulent sets and costumes, even the theatre auditorium itself), vaudeville projected happiness, riches and the contemporary ideal of physical beauty as important things to attain in the new century. The new mythology as perpetuated by vaudeville dealt with most aspects of urban life in the new cities. While technology and science gained an increasing impact in urban society, the priest or shaman of past cultures became the "professors", magicians and mind-readers of the vaudeville stage, even elaborate stage effects constituted the new "magic".

In North America, vaudeville was the perfect replacement for Victorian-age popular theatre. Victorian neo-classicism did not accommodate well to the rapidly industrialized new cities. By nature, Victorian classicism contained many universals in its ideology; universal themes were no longer applicable to the new rising middle class, with its increased leisure time and desire for "up-to-the-minute" entertainments which embellished the more spectacular elements of everyday life in North America. Lengthy melodramas or operas did not accommodate well into a ten-hour work day; a shorter show offered several times a day seven days a week was both convenient to theatre-goer and profitable for theatre-owner. Theatrical expression in the form of vaudeville became primarily a business and secondarily an artistic expression of a new culture. This highly commercialized form borrowed from the legitimate stage, and amalgamated tried and true conventions of the past into a highly successful and socially influential form.

Vaudeville could also educate the new immigrant about prevailing codes of conduct and popular attitudes of the time. Some Pantages acts, such as the staged version of the "Sinking of the Lusitania",[27] not only informed audiences about current affairs, but also reinforced a political or social attitude. Assorted war-interest acts defined precisely who was the villian and who the hero, and were undoubtedly effective in beaming patriotic sentiment across the footlights.

Although variety was inherently a part of vaudeville, patrons could expect only fashionable and frequently minor variations on similar themes.

> ...vaudeville symbolized unpretentious enjoyment, abandonment to the folksy humor of slapstick, pratfalls, comic make-up, pride in the recognition of wheezy jokes, the satisfaction of beating the comedian to the tag-line and joining in familiar choruses. It was a comfortable belt-loosening familiarity.[28]

Vaudeville established for its audiences a sense of familiarity also by its format;[29] as was the case with the Pantages theatre, the schedule was unfailing in its consistency. Seven days a week, twice a day at 2:30 and 8:30, six acts and a film serial were offered. When the format changed from five to six acts in 1915, the Bulletin announcement precluded any surprise that may have been experienced by a patron. Although vaudeville audiences may have come to expect the unexpected within the confines of a specific act, the pattern remained the same: animal acts, acrobats, comedians, singers, musical playlets, dancers, magicians, and the motion-play, all of which took turns being popular headline acts for any given season.

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[27] Bulletin, June 19, 1915.

[28] Sobel, p. 49.

[29] McLean, p. 7.

Just as vaudeville eventually became absorbed into later entertainment forms, vaudeville drew, often unabashedly, upon the talents and skills of artists from previous popular forms. In announcing the arrival of Parish and Peru, entertainers who learned their trade with travelling medicine shows, the Bulletin acknowledges how one entertainment form melted into another:

> A one-act performer had no piece in a medicine show, for he had to sing, dance, do acrobatic stunts, etc., to hold his job. So Parish and Peru learned to do everything as members of the troupe of Dr. Arion Ed. Getter, who through the change in styles and the vigilance of the medicinal profession is no longer permitted to make his living by selling a pink sweet smelling panacea for all the ills on the calender at one dollar per bottle, with a lot of hot air and a vaudeville entertainment thrown in for a good measure.
>
> "Many and many a good vaudeville act has come out of the medicine show," said Frank Parish yesterday at the Pantages. "But the day of that type of entertainment is fortunately over. The public wants its money's worth now..."[30]

By freely admitting that new forms were favored over the old, North Americans could map their progress in the new century. The above article calls the medicine show "old fashioned", and uses the phrase derogatorily. By defining something as "old fashioned" the current offering, in relationship, becomes "new", and therefore

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[30] Bulletin, July 3, 1918.

"better". Thus, vaudeville pitted glamour and wit against the forces of things "old fashioned" and frequently those rural or ethnic. The message was clear -- beauty, wealth and belief in the democratic state with the acceptance of its ideals would facilitate individual acceptance in society.

Some acts billed at the Edmonton Pantages, such as the De Michele Brothers, "Those Comical Wops"[31] and Rucker and Winifred, "Ebony Hued Entertainers" in their "coon and chinaman act",[32] may raise the eyebrows of civil libertarians today, and perhaps justifiably so, but it remains that vaudeville helped expedite the merge of new immigrants into the mainstream of North American life. Vaudeville served as a means of assimilation and consolidation of existing and changing value judgements in a rapidly expanding and increasing industrialized society. In terms of its ethnic content, vaudeville can be seen as a microcosm of a larger and relatively new society, manifesting its hopes for security, along with its dreams and aspirations.

By today's standards, much of vaudeville's fare would be stamped racist or sexist. (A Pantages playlet called "On the Golf Links" boasted of a set "...decorated with girls.")[33] Ethnic humour

[31] Bulletin, October 7, 1916.

[32] Bulletin, July 28, 1917.

[33] Bulletin, September 13, 1919.

was particularly popular in vaudeville prior to World War I,[34] a period which correlates to the heavy influx of European immigration into America. The ethnic joke, then as now, is reflective of a society looking for a means to cope with another society which will not, to put it simply, go away. The unknown, in the form of the new immigrants, could be conquered through humor on the familiar medium of the vaudeville stage.[35] In his treatise on ethnic humor in vaudeville, Paul Distler indicates the significance of sterotyped behaviour as isolated by vaudeville comedians in ethnic acts:

> Whatever the ethnic type chosen, whatever traits of dress, character occupation, or dialect emphasized, or whatever the degree of exaggeration exacted, the result was always a full-fleshed comic character creation based squarely on the immigrant prototype. And while the ethnic comics reigned, they had no peers in audience popularity.[36]

Newcomers to Canada and the States who attended vaudeville were unwittingly hastening their assimilation into the New World. Seeing fellow audience-members laughing at his cultural idiosyncracies and dialects, the eager-to-belong immigrant would have a clear indication of which characteristics to modify in his or her own behaviour. In his analysis of what makes us laugh, Henri Bergson points out that comedy can be a means of attaining "sociability", and poses the question "...how can a man fashion his personality after that of another if he does not first study others as well as himself?"[37]

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[34] Paul Antonie Distler, "Ethnic Comedy in Vaudeville and Burlesque", American Popular Entertainment (London, England: Greenwood Press, 1977), p. 36.

[35] Ibid., p. 38.

[36] Ibid., p. 40.

By the time that Pantages vaudeville arrived in Edmonton, ethnic humor had lost much of its previous popularity. By World War I, the second generation Canadians had, for the most part, settled into North American life and it is likely that even the first generation resented reminders of their ethnic origins. However, "ethnic" comics still appeared frequently on Pantages bills, but acts which relied on dialect gags seem to have replaced the cruder and more biting earlier ethnic acts. Joe Laurie Jr. offers examples of "pages torn out of old vaudeville"; the following is a portion of a fairly typical ethnic act employing the dialectical gag:

> The Double Wop Act
>
> Both enter as music plays...STRAIGHT MAN walks a bit ahead of the COMEDIAN. They are both dressed in misfit suits. Comedian has long mustache and bandanna handkerchief around neck. Straight man wears celluloid collar, red tie, big watch chain, yellow shoes that squeak, and is sort of sporty in an Italian way.
>
> STRAIGHT: Come ona - wassa madder - come ona...
> COMIC: Waita one minoots. I can no walka fast. My uncle isa sick.
> STRAIGHT: Whatsa your uncle gotta to do wit you no walka fast?
> COMIC: I tella you my uncle isa sick.
> STRAIGHT: Your uncle isa sick?
> COMIC: (a little angrily) Yeh, my uncle. (Points to ankle.)

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[37] Henri Bergson, "The Comic Element", European Theories of the Drama, ed. Barrett H. Clark (New York: Crown Publishers, 1965), p. 392.

STRAIGHT: Oh, you meana ankles. Say, whatsa your name?
COMIC: My namesa Tom Giariba Idi Columbo Scabootcha Castella Mascrici, but day calla me Tom for short.
STRAIGHT: Well, Tom is no high classa. I will calla you Tommas.
COMIC: Say, my namesa Tom and you calls me Tommas?
STRAIGHT: Sure. Dots ahigh classa for Tom.
COMIC: I gotta brudder his namesa Jack. What you calla him?...[38]

The American melting-pot concept applied today by social historians was conceivably hastened by vaudeville. Meanwhile in Canada, American vaudeville had succeeded in infiltrating whatever Canadian nationalistic aspirations existed by the twentieth century. The nineteenth century Canadian may well have examined his Anglo cultural heritage to define his position in the New World:

> Surrounded by an indomitable wilderness in a nation still in the process of formation and crowded by an older, more dynamic and violent neighbour to the south, the nineteenth-century English Canadian naturally looked to the British Empire for his cultural and political security.[39]

The wave of "unwashed masses" into Canada radically altered the effect of Canadian-British sentimental and imperialistic ties. The new immigrants frequently had no bond to the "Mother Empire", and European-inspired vaudeville made much more sense to these new arrivals over Canadian-authored, but hackneyed ersatz-English plays which reflected a dying and increasingly irrelevant imperialistic and colonialistic concern. Beginning with Charles Mair's Tecumseh, many nineteenth-century Canadian plays were written as extended poems, a style which many Canadian authors copied from what was, or thought to be, a British literary convention.

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[38] Joe Laurie Jr., pp. 448-449.

[39] Anton Wagner and Richard Plant, Canada's Lost Plays, vol. one (Toronto: CTR Publications, 1978), p. 14.

Relatively little documented information exists on American vaudeville, and even less exists about the Canadian vaudeville experience. Indeed, the topic of North American vaudeville has practically escaped scholarly scrutiny. However, vaudeville circuits operating in Canada tended to be American-based, and their infiltration into the Canadian market overshadowed Canadian attempts at circuit-type vaudeville. The United States maintained the necessary mechanics to accommodate the large circuits, primarily due to its larger population base and commercial climate. Thus, smaller circuits like the Pantages, which was considered to be the "big-time of small-time", could easily form virtual monopolies in Canada, particularly the sparsely-populated Canadian West.

Vaudeville is not so much a typically Canadian art form; without the influence of our southerly neighbour, it is debatable whether or not vaudeville would have made a significant dent in our theatrical heritage. Vaudeville may not be indigenous to Canada, but in consideration of the multiple forms borrowed from Europe, can vaudeville truly be "indigenous" to the States? Rather, it was the packaging and marketing of the form, and its palatability to Canadian and American audiences which constitute vaudeville as a North American art form.

In terms of early settlement and social development, Western Canada shares more common experience with the American north-west than the rest of Canada east of Winnipeg. (Edmonton had and has a far greater similarity to Seattle than to Toronto.) Massive immigration prior to 1900, and rapid industrialization, were creating metropolises like Montreal and New York. Meanwhile, Western Canada and parts of the American north-west still existed in relative isolation, having an economic base which was for the most part dependent on agriculture. Vaudeville was a means by which these smaller centres could identify with the big cities of North America. The opulent "palace" stylings of vaudeville houses like the Pantages gave a sense of arrival into the exciting new century, along with a reason for celebration. Finally the plow had given way to the promise of the relative riches and security to be found in the new cities.

CHAPTER FIVE

I

THE EDMONTON PANTAGES THEATRE AND THE PANTAGES CIRCUIT, 1921 TO 1929

During the 1920's vaudeville had another major competitor to contend with besides motion pictures. Radio, "...a something-for-nothing entertainment that all show business box offices dreaded...",[1] had gained popularity to the degree that three million North American homes had their own set.[2] In the early 1920's Keith censored the word "radio" from all his vaudeville acts, unless it was used in a derogatory manner. But radio and motion pictures were supplanting vaudeville as the most popular Canadian and American entertainment forms:

> By 1921 many theatres that had previously played both [motion pictures and vaudeville] dropped vaudeville, offering films alone, or with only one feature act....A *Variety* survey showed 12,000 vaudeville acts idle.[3]

In 1921 in Edmonton, only the Empire continued to offer vaudeville, and this was on a split-week basis with staged plays. The Pantages, now advertised as the Metropolitan, began to house dramatic stock companies, while other theatres such as the Empress, the Allen and the Monarch presented motion pictures.[4]

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[1] Green and Laurie Jr., p. 231.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] *Ibid*., 269.

At the Metropolitan, the Allen Players opened "...a grand season of stock..." with Miss Verna Felton, a "leading emotional actress" featured in Polly With A Past. The Bulletin announced that Edmontonians could look forward to "...some high-class comedy and dramatic productions in the coming months."[5] Offering Edmontonians a new play each week, the Allen Players performed such pieces as Nobody's Money, which involved two noveau-riche writers who have problems with income tax officials. Another Allen play was The Dawn of a Tomorrow, billed as "...one of the biggest and best things this northern metropolis has known."[6] By spring of 1923 the Metropolitan Players replaced the Allen Players, offering in their "farewell week" a "pulsating stage play in three acts" called Why Wives Go Wrong.[7]

In March of 1923 the Bulletin announced the appointment of a new manager for the Pantages Theatre in Edmonton. (The Pantages Theatre was never again referred to as the Metropolitan.) H.W. Pierong arrived in Edmonton during the "throes of re-modelling" of the theatre, and promised that the opening bill would "...smack of novelty so far as the vaudeville world was concerned." Quick to forget that Alexander Pantages had already once withdrawn his

[4] Bulletin, December 12, 1921

[5] Bulletin, December 1, 1921.

[6] Bulletin, August 7, 1922.

[7] Bulletin, March 10, 1923.

circuit from the city, the Bulletin spoke of the Edmonton Pantages as being "...one of the most favored at the Pantages general headquarters."[8] Two days after the initial announcement, the Bulletin theatre reviewer stated that the re-installation of Pantages vaudeville was met with "universal satisfaction" in Edmonton, as "...since the theatre closed some two years ago the loss of vaudeville has been severely felt."[9] The opening bill was a 'unit show', "...a new form...which has developed since Edmonton has been out of the variety world."[10] Not unlike the Pantages vaudeville offerings of former years, the unit show consisted of:

> ...four or five vaudeville acts, followed by an extravaganza, or musical comedy with a large company of its own in addition to which every player who has appeared in the previous acts, essays a role. The last act for the opening bill contains in the neighborhood of 25 girls.[11]

The opening night show of 1923 featured a musical, The Whirl of the World, a "musical extravaganza" with a cast of 42.[12]

Gone was the "Pantagescope" of former years, but short motion pictures continued to be included in bills. The Pantages had installed a cooling plant in July of 1923,[13] and the new bill which accompanied this announcement is typical of the kind of vaudeville offered for the next few years. The press release stated that:

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[8] Bulletin, March 27, 1923.

[9] Bulletin, March 29, 1923.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Bulletin, March 27, 1923.

[12] Bulletin, March 29, 1923.

[13] Bulletin, July 3, 1924.

> The headline act on the excellent Pantages vaudeville bill..."Bohemian Nights" is a singing and dancing revue with a company of six all-star artistes...A program of terpsichorean effects in whirlwind and folk dances interspaced with song is given...Smith and Allman in "Bits of This and That", a program of comedy songs, some witty cross-fire dialogue and some very clever harmonica playing...Strasel's wonder seal, the world's most versatile animal, presents a wonderful program of contortion, headstands, juggling and balancing and features his rendition of the national anthem upon a musical instrument. McGeery and Peters will be seen in their latest laugh-getter "Bright and Oily" [in which] a gasoline station owner and a motor cycle cop are heard in a breezy line of conversation. Another excellent vaudeville attraction this week is "Fun in the Land of Dykes" in which Charles Hart's Hollanders are seen to the best advantage...[14]

Episode Five of Fighting Blood and jazz selections from Al Preston's band completed the bill.

Appearing in 1925 with Beatrice Byrne, a xylophone artist, was a vaudeville skit entitled "Barber of Seville". "Vaudeville patrons should not get this week's headline attraction mixed up with the opera of the same name," cautioned the Bulletin, as "the farce shows that it is not the easiest thing in the world to get the required haircut or shave, especially now when the bobbed hair ladies hog most of the chairs."[15]

The unit show on the Edmonton Pantages stage continued into 1926. Edmontonians were offered Broadway Flashes, this being a condensed version of Flashes of the Great White Way, which had previously toured to Edmonton, at an admission cost of $2.00. For fifty cents, theatre-goers could see the Pantages circuit's offering, complete with a "star" in the person of Nora Cuneen who arrived in Edmonton with "several wardrobe trunks full of Paris gowns."[16]

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[14] Bulletin, July 3, 1924.

[15] Bulletin, April 1, 1925.

By the end of 1927 Pantages vaudeville had disappeared yet again from the theatre-announcement pages of the local dailies. At the end of the year, it was announced that "Edmonton's favorite stock company", the Gordinier Players, would assume the Pantages Theatre as their "permanent home". This company opened in the New Year with "a wholesome domestic comedy", What Anne Brought Home. Manager Gordinier announced to Edmontonians that he had secured the rights to "plays that are entirely new to this city",[17] which was no small achievement in light of the fact that stock houses like the Pantages offered a new play weekly. One of the last plays staged by the Gordinier Players in the Pantages was Why Wives Worry, about which little was disclosed: "It would not do to relate the story in advance for that would depreciate the fun...", wrote the Bulletin.[18]

Pantages vaudeville returned yet again in September of 1928. Assuming the same performance scheduling as the Empire Theatre, the

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[16] Bulletin, May 5, 1926.

[17] Bulletin, December 24, 1927.

[18] Bulletin, April 12, 1928.

Pantages now operated on a split-week basis, with "high-class feature pictures" for the first half of the week and the remainder devoted to vaudeville. Again, carpenters, painters and cleaners were busy creating "vast improvements", and it was promised that Alexander Pantages would be sending a "high-class program". "Meet me at the Pan", said the Bulletin, "will again be the slogan for theatregoers this autumn."[19]

In July of 1929 the Pantages again changed its format, offering combination programs of vaudeville and motion pictures. Gone were the "musical extravaganzas", as comic skits and short musical interludes appeared between movies.[20] Within the same month, without announcement or explanation, the new bill proclaimed "Pantages Vaudeville Discontinued". The familiar "Pantages Unequalled Vaudeville" logo became "Pantages Motion Pictures".[21] Thus ended circuit vaudeville at the "Pan".

Meanwhile, Alexander Pantages had sold six of his American theatres to the Radio-Keith-Orpheum, a conglomerate formed out of America's two main vaudeville circuits. He had asked eight million dollars for his houses in Tacoma, Portland, San Diego, Spokane, San Francisco and Salt Lake City, but received only three and a half million.[22] Shortly after, Variety Weekly announced: "WALL

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[19] Bulletin, September 19, 1928.

[20] Bulletin, July 20, 1929.

[21] Bulletin, July 24, 1929.

[22] Laurie, p. 401.

STREET LAYS AN EGG", when the bottom fell out of the stock market in October of 1929.[23] Pantages received payment for his theatres partially in cash and the balance in RKO bonds, which became worthless when the company went into receivership.[24] To make matters worse for Pantages, he was arrested and subsequently jailed for the alleged rape of a "seventeen-year-old girl of questionable talent and virtue."[25] The resulting court case became the cause celebre of the season; however, the case was finally closed when the plaintiff, Eunice Pringle, agreed to settle out of court for $3,000 and dropped the million-dollar suit against Pantages.[26] During the ordeal, Pantages had spent a million dollars in clearing himself of charges,[27] and had managed to survive a heart attack.[28] At the same time that Pantages awaited bail in prison, his wife was arrested on a drunken-driving charge in which a Japanese gardener had been killed.[29]

Pantages had been involved in another earlier lawsuit which caused an equal furor when "Klondike Kate" Rockwell charged him with a breach of promise suit in 1905. The case was dismissed the following year. "Klondike Kate's" biographer, Ellis Lucia, points out that it was probably no coincidence that Pantages was arrested in 1929 on the same day of the Sourdough Stampede anniversary organized in Seattle. Animosity between Kate's sourdough admirers and Pantages was no secret, and the gold rush veterans openly cheered Pantages' arrest in 1929. It is also noted that Pantages had previously left town whenever a sourdough reunion was held.[30]

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[23] Gilbert, p. 381.

[24] Laurie, p. 401.

[25] Saloutos, p. 146.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 147.

[27] *Variety Weekly*, February 19, 1936.

[28] Saloutos, p. 146.

[29] Ellis Lucia, *The Life and Legend of Kitty Rockwell* (New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1962), p. 210.

Oblivious to the fact that vaudeville was virtually dead and that North America was entering the worst economic depression in history by 1930, Pantages maintained his own fantasy that vaudeville could be revitalized:

> This is the right time to go into show business... Independent picture operators are crazy to get into vaudeville, and I'm going to give it to them. Pantages can save the show business.[31]

Pantages did make an attempt at a comeback when, in 1933, he leased theatres in Hollywood, Seattle and Salt Lake City. Evidently, it failed because of the immense geographical distances between the stop-overs.[32] Always receptive to innovation, Pantages introduced a new type of movie trailer. When a large-budget motion picture was announced in one of his houses, two actors playing on the

[30] Lucia, p. 240.

[31] Saloutos, p. 147, from the Seattle Times, May 5, 1933.

[32] Laurie, p. 401.

current vaudeville bill would act out the film's highlights in an interior set.[33]

Pantages suffered one more heart attack in 1936 which proved fatal. By the time of his death he had entered semi-retirement, with his son Rodney managing the Los Angeles theatre.[34]

In a less-than-flattering eulogy, Joe Laurie Jr. said of Pantages:

> The only thing that Pantages contributed to vaudeville was the opposition he gave to the Orpheum and S & C circuits, which made it possible for the actors to dicker for the salaries they wanted. He certainly played a big part in small-time vaudeville![35]

Viewed from vaudeville's pinnacle of New York's Palace Theatre, Pantages' contributions may not have seemed great, or even significant. However, as an entrepreneur, manager, owner and general organizer of vaudeville for the Canadian and American north west, Pantages' endeavours reflect no small achievement. As a self-made man, his theatre empire was the product of individual effort, talent and optimism. Pantages' life embodies the classic rags-to-riches story of a penniless immigrant who had made his fortune in the New World.

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[33] Laurie, p. 403.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

II

THE PANTAGES - STRAND THEATRE, 1930 TO 1979

The stock market crash of 1929 had a considerable impact on Edmonton; farm prices fell drastically and unemployment was rampant.[1] However, the economic turnabout hardly seems to have affected movie houses, as ads for motion picture presentations took on an even greater prominence in the local dailies. The Depression undoubtedly hastened the demise of stock companies, as such entertainment became a relative rarity during the 1930's. Outside of a few theatres which still offered variety-type acts between movies, vaudeville was virtually dead.

Without either the Pantages vaudeville circuit or stock companies requiring performance space, the Pantages Theatre became an unnecessary and therefore unused theatre space in 1930.[2] The theatre remained dark until 1931, when a screen was installed and it became the Strand moving picture theatre. Operating as a part of Alexander Entwistle's local chain of cinemas,[3] the Strand also housed productions by Edmonton's Little Theatre and the local opera company.[4] From 1936 to about 1940, the Edmonton Prophetic Bible Institute sponsored Sunday evening broadcasts by Premier William ("Bible Bill") Aberhart from the Strand stage.

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[1] J.G. MacGregor, Edmonton - A History (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1975), pp. 243-244.

[2] Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 247.

[3] By 1931, Entwistle owned the south side's Princess and two other downtown movie theatres.

In 1945 the Pantages-Strand Theatre was sold for $150,000. The new owners, representing National Trust Co. Ltd., announced that they would continue to operate the theatre as a movie house.[5] The theatre itself had remained virtually unchanged since its erection in 1913, but Entwistle Theatres and Famous Players Canadian Corp. announced in 1953 that a "face-lifting" would occur at the Strand. Although the Edmonton Journal article acknowledged the Strand as "Edmonton's last theatre link with the days when vaudeville flourished in the city...", the "renovations" included the obliteration of some of the theatre's original architectural features. Eight hundred new seats were installed (halving the theatre's original occupancy), a concrete floor replaced the old wooden one, a larger screen was installed, and the loge boxes were lopped off the walls.[6] Remarking on the "modernized moving picture theatre", local writer Tony Cashman commented that: "When the place reopens, not even Alexander Pantages would recognize it from the inside."[7] Undoubtedly this would have been the case, as much

[4] Profile, "Three New Designated Heritage Sites", vol. 5, no. 3, February 12, 1976.

[5] Edmonton Journal, April 4, 1945.

[6] Edmonton Journal, November 27, 1953.

[7] Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 247.

of the original gilt and grandeur was buried in the 1953 renovation under liberal coats of turquoise paint.

One individual worked for most of his life at the Pantages-Strand, witnessing first-hand three generations of Edmontonians being entertained at the Jasper Avenue theatre. Charles Wilson was the doorman from 1913 to 1947, and in 1953 he became the building superintendent.[8] He related an incident which indicated that the theatre was not without its mysteries; indeed, the same story was repeated to the writer on many occasions by the theatre staff in 1979, several of whom even claimed to have had ghostly encounters. In 1920, Lester Treffery, the manager of the Pantages, was found dead at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. A wound at the base of his skull established that he had died of brain injuries, and the local police never did determine if he fell or was pushed down the stairs.[9] On a happier occasion in 1960, Mr. Wilson posed for the Edmonton Journal with the original Pantages sign, which was found forming the inside wall of a salvage yard.[10] This sign can now be seen, having undergone restoration, at the City of Edmonton Archives.

During the 1960's, the Strand stage again hosted several live performances, the most notable being the Walterdale melodramas presented in conjunction with Klondike Days. The year 1963 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Pantages-Strand Theatre, and a special vaudeville-style show was produced on the old Pantages stage. Attempts were made to restore the theatre to its original state, and Rolphe Reinhardt, then manager of the Strand, organized the 1953 renovations. (Mr. Reinhardt gained much of his theatre experience at the National Theatre in Weimar, Germany.)[11] Mr. Reinhardt was determined to offer Edmontonians a glimpse of entertainment as was enjoyed by their parents and grandparents:

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[8] Cashman, The Edmonton Story, p. 247.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Edmonton Journal, October 26, 1960.

> For the last six years I have been dreaming about our 50th Anniversary and what a wonderful idea it would be to have once more all the glitter of vaudeville on this famous old stage. Well, here it is, at least for one more night. We all worked hard in the last few months...[12]

The theatre staff brought original props out of storage and existing back-drops were repaired and re-hung. The recessed lighting panels were cleaned and restored, and much of the auditorium was re-gilt and painted back to the original ivory. Under the direction of Mr. Reinhardt, the special performance included a cast of seventy local singers, dancers, tumblers and musicians, and was followed by a silent movie. Spencer's Mountain, a new release featuring Henry Fonda and Maureen O'Hara completed the evening.[13] Edmonton Journal staff writer Barry Westgate commented on the success of the evening:

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[11] "50 Years of Entertainment for Edmontonians", souvenir program commemorating the Pantages-Strand Theatre, 1963.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Edmonton Journal, May 13, 1963.

> ...a packed house of guests, many of them Edmonton old-timers, watched vaudeville return to an old haunt...Too much of Edmonton's cultural past is allowed to fade into oblivion...The Strand has a place in the city's history.[14]

In 1976 the Strand Theatre was declared a registered historic site by Alberta Culture Minister Horst Schmid,[15] despite the building owners' intentions to appeal the designation.[16] By this time, the theatre played only second and third-rate movies, and many Edmontonians considered the Strand to be a "fire-trap". (The Strand may have been one of the safer theatres in town, with its concrete floor and numerous fire exits, all twelve of which were usable in 1979.) A site data form from the files of Alberta Culture, dated 1974, reveals that the theatre was "quite sound structurally"; however, the electrical system required replacement. Under the Historic Sites Act, the owners would have been eligible for government assistance toward the building's preservation or reconstruction. However, the Strand's official designation, being registered as opposed to classified, did not prevent the alteration or demolition of the historic building.

By 1978, the provincial government stated publicly that only parts of the theatre would be saved from demolition, but which parts were not specified. A City alderman announced that the province's desire for the City alone to preserve the Strand would result in its demolition, as restoration costs were "prohibitive".[17] Neither the City nor the province, and certainly not the owners, assumed the responsibility for saving the theatre from the wrecker's ball. The final curtain dropped on the Strand in January, 1979.

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[14] Edmonton Journal, May 13, 1963.

[15] Edmonton Journal, February 7, 1976.

[16] Edmonton Journal, April 15, 1975.

In commemoration of the historical and theatrical significance of the Pantages-Strand Theatre, a group of local actors organized a special farewell performance on New Year's Eve, 1978, sixty-six years after the theatre originally opened. The Canadian-made film The Silent Partner was shown, followed fittingly by a live performance. The audience of about fifteen listened as Merrilyn and Angela Gann sang an Elizabethan madrigal in front of an old fly drop hung especially for the occasion.[18]

By June of 1979 the Pantages-Strand Theatre was a pile of rubble. Parts of the decorative plaster work were removed and put into storage, with the hope of someday reconstructing the theatre at Fort Edmonton Park, a historic village.[19] Ironically, George Brown's vision of a 1913 skyscraper was realized in 1980 terms with the glass and concrete Interprovincial Pipeline Building, erected on the same site.

[17] Edmonton Journal, June 26, 1978.

[18] Edmonton Journal, January 5, 1979.

[19] Edmonton Journal, January 14, 1978.

In 1979 Frank Hutton of the Edmonton Journal wrote:

> If Edmonton is so theatre conscious as we contend, how come a cornerstone of the performing arts like the old Pantages is allowed to slip, practically unnoticed, into oblivion?[20]

Just as the Pantages' mezzanine balcony afforded the opportunity to see and be seen, today's performance palaces, such as the Citadel and Jubilee Auditorium, accommodate the social and "cultural" aspirations of Edmonton. Not unlike the shows at the old Pantages, the emphasis is hardly on our past, but theatre today continues to seek and define our position in the present. As a relatively young city, we continue to look to the south, particularly New York, for assurance that we have arrived. Although the obliteration of a building destroys an obvious reminder of our past, the fact remains that our theatrical heritage is as rich and diverse as we allow ourselves to discover it to be.

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[20] Edmonton Journal, January 5, 1979.

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APPENDIX A.

SELECT LIST OF EARLY EDMONTON THEATRES, PLAYBILL ADVERTISEMENTS OF EARLY EDMONTON THEATRES, AND EDMONTON BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT OF SARAH BERNHARDT'S ARRIVAL IN EDMONTON.

Select List of Early Edmonton Theatres

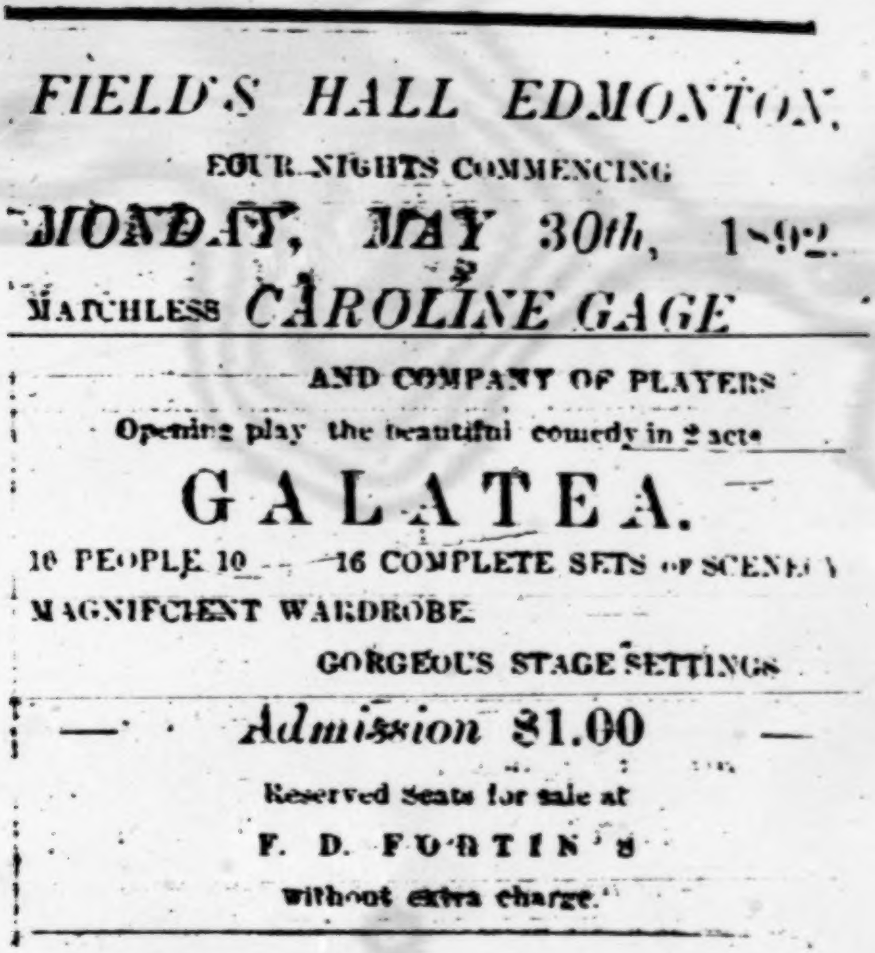
	LOCATION	DATES OF OPERATION
Robertson Hall (concerts, stock companies)	Jasper Ave. and 97 St.	1892-1906 (destroyed by fire)
Thistle Arena (concerts, stock companies)	102 St. and Jasper Ave.	1902-1913 (destroyed by fire)
Edmonton Opera House (stock companies)	10320 Jasper Ave.	1906-1910 (became the Lyceum in 1910)
Kevin Theatre ("Polite Vaudeville")	Jasper Ave. and 103 St.	1907-1907 (gutted by fire)
Empire Theatre (first) (vaudeville, stock companies)	100 St. and 101 A. Ave.	1907-1907 (became the Bijou in 1907)
Lyric Theatre ("Refined Vaudeville")	101 St. and Jasper Ave.	1907-1908 (closed in 1908 for renovations, never re-opened)
Orpheum Theatre ("the Family Theatre")	101 St. and Jasper Ave.	1907-1909 (renovated for motion pictures)
Bijou ("farthest North moving picture show in America")	same building as first Empire Theatre	1907-1912 (became the New Bijou in 1912)
Dominion Theatre (stock companies)	same site as Kevin Theatre	1908-1909 (re-opened in 1911 as the Majestic moving picture theatre)
Grand Theatre (vaudeville, stock companies)	101 St. and Jasper Ave.	1908-1909 (renovated for motion pictures, became the Starland, in 1910 renamed the Garland)

Lyceum Theatre ("Edmonton's Only Stock Playhouse)	same building as Edmonton Opera House	1910-1914 (closure probably due to war effort)
Empire Theatre (second) (vaudeville, stock companies)	10139 103 St.	1910-1946 (renovated in 1946 as the Trocadero, a dance hall)
New Bijou (moving pictures)	10134 101 St.	1912-1929 (currently in use as the Rialto)
Empress Theatre (moving pictures)	10125 Jasper Ave.	1912-1962 (used as a movie house until its demolition in 1962)
Pantages Theatre (vaudeville, moving pictures)	102 St. and Jasper Ave.	1913-1979 (vaudeville and stock companies from 1913 to 1930, used as a movie house until its demolition in 1979)
Princess Theatre (vaudeville, moving pictures)	10337 82 Ave.	1915-

SOURCES: James Orrell, Fallen Empires: The Lost Theatres of Edmonton, (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1981)

Henderson Directories, 1905-1914.

Edmonton Bulletin, 1905-1914.



FIELD'S HALL EDMONTON.

FOUR NIGHTS COMMENCING

MONDAY, MAY 30th, 1892.

MATCHLESS *CAROLINE GAGE*

AND COMPANY OF PLAYERS

Opening play the beautiful comedy in 2 acts

GALATEA.

10 PEOPLE 10 — 16 COMPLETE SETS OF SCENERY

MAGNIFCIENT WARDROBE

GORGEOUS STAGE SETTINGS

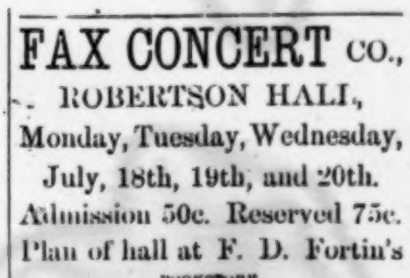
— *Admission* $1.00 —

Reserved Seats for sale at

F. D. FORTIN'S

without extra charge.

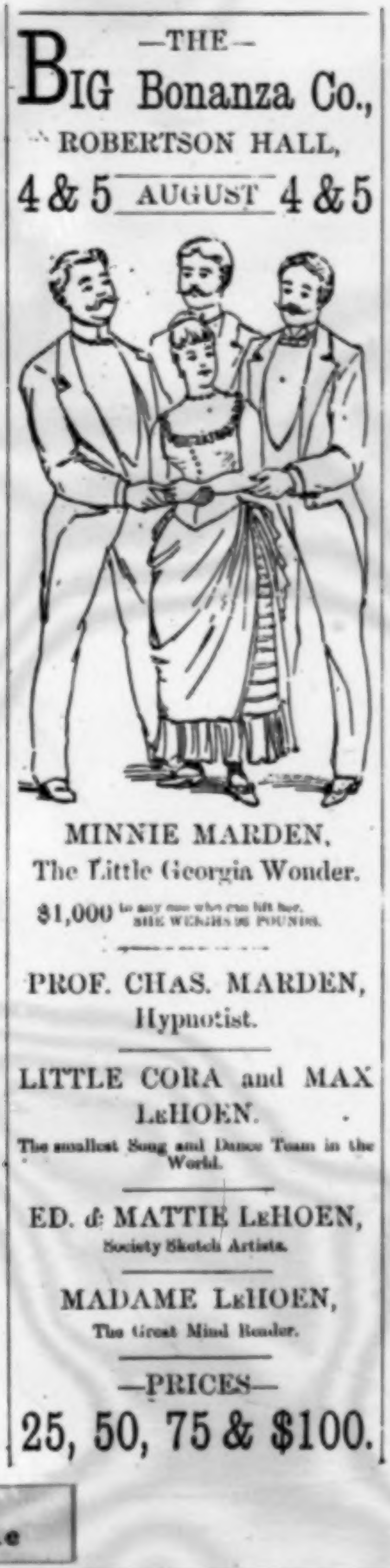
Edmonton Bulletin, May 30, 1892.



FAX CONCERT CO.,
ROBERTSON HALL,
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,
July, 18th, 19th, and 20th.
Admission 50c. Reserved 75c.
Plan of hall at F. D. Fortin's
BOOKSTORE.

Edmonton Bulletin, July 13, 1893.

POOR PRINT
Epreuve illisible



—THE—

BIG Bonanza Co.,

ROBERTSON HALL,

4 & 5 AUGUST 4 & 5

MINNIE MARDEN,
The Little Georgia Wonder.

$1,000 to any one who can lift her. SHE WEIGHS [illegible] POUNDS.

PROF. CHAS. MARDEN,
Hypnotist.

LITTLE CORA and MAX LEHOEN.
The smallest Song and Dance Team in the World.

ED. & MATTIE LEHOEN,
Society Sketch Artists.

MADAME LEHOEN,
The Great Mind Reader.

—PRICES—

25, 50, 75 & $100.

Edmonton Bulletin, August 7, 1893.

Cosgrove Concert

..COMPANY..

New 1898 Programme.

We have been here: You have seen us—and we pleased you then. We are coming again and we guarantee to please you better than we did before or refund your money.

Outside of our regular musical programme and Kinetoscope exhibition, we will put on here ten lime light views of Klondike parties leaving Edmonton and the Landing.

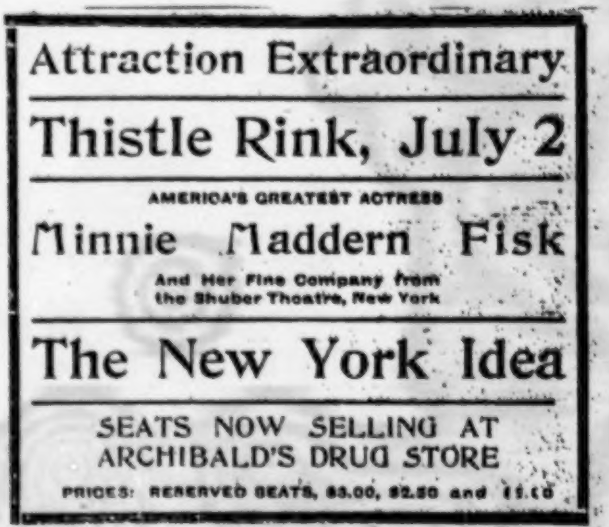
Edmonton Opera House

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings, Feb. 22, 23, 24 and 25.

Plan of hall at Macdonald's Pharmacy and Bossange's Bookstore.

Edmonton Bulletin, February 7, 1898.

POOR PRINT
Epreuve illisible



Attraction Extraordinary

Thistle Rink, July 2

AMERICA'S GREATEST ACTRESS

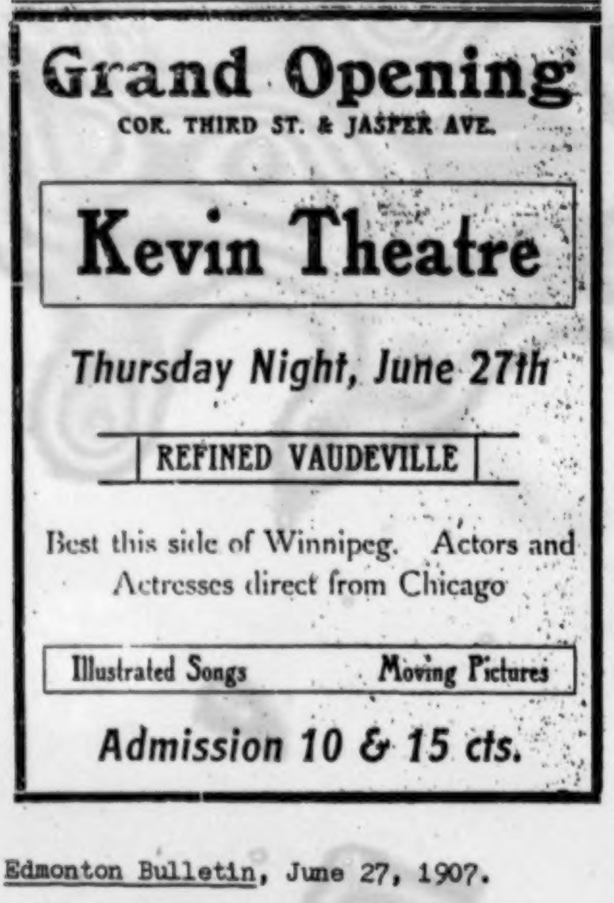
Minnie Maddern Fisk

And Her Fine Company from
the Shuber Theatre, New York

The New York Idea

SEATS NOW SELLING AT
ARCHIBALD'S DRUG STORE

PRICES: RESERVED SEATS, $3.00, $2.50 and $1.00



Grand Opening

COR. THIRD ST. & JASPER AVE.

Kevin Theatre

Thursday Night, June 27th

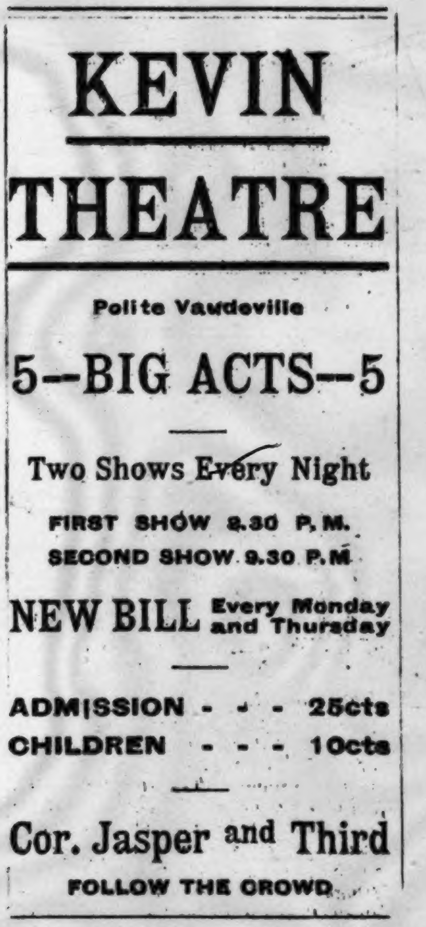
REFINED VAUDEVILLE

Best this side of Winnipeg. Actors and
Actresses direct from Chicago

Illustrated Songs Moving Pictures

Admission 10 & 15 cts.

Edmonton Bulletin, June 27, 1907.



KEVIN
THEATRE

Polite Vaudeville

5--BIG ACTS--5

Two Shows Every Night

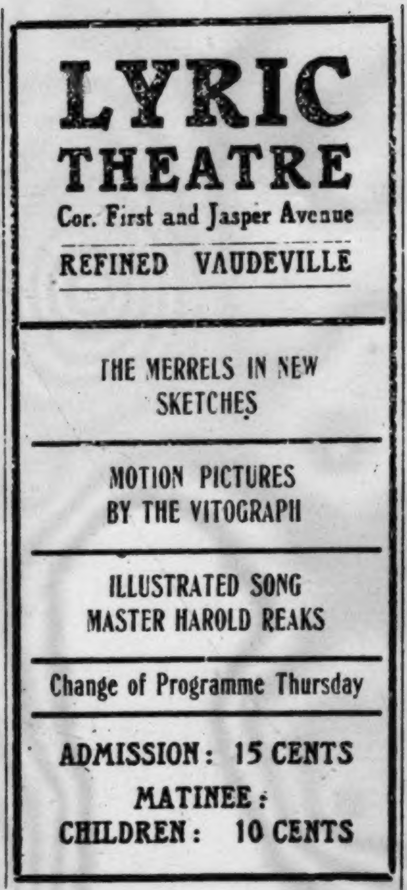
FIRST SHOW 8.30 P.M.
SECOND SHOW 9.30 P.M

NEW BILL Every Monday and Thursday

ADMISSION - - - 25cts
CHILDREN - - - 10cts

Cor. Jasper and Third
FOLLOW THE CROWD

Edmonton Bulletin, July 5, 1907.



LYRIC
THEATRE
Cor. First and Jasper Avenue
REFINED VAUDEVILLE

THE MERRELS IN NEW SKETCHES

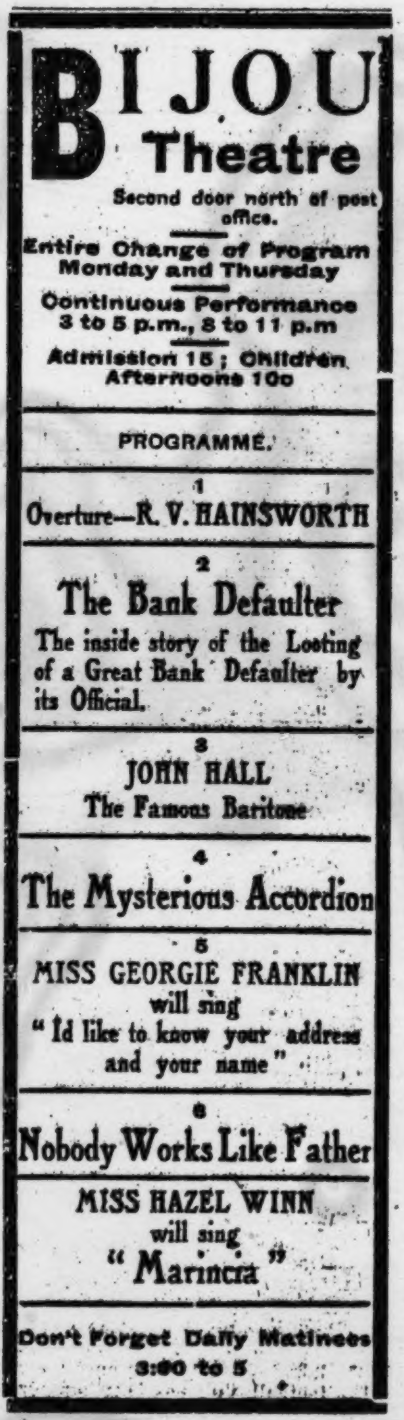
MOTION PICTURES BY THE VITOGRAPH

ILLUSTRATED SONG
MASTER HAROLD REAKS

Change of Programme Thursday

ADMISSION: 15 CENTS
MATINEE:
CHILDREN: 10 CENTS

Edmonton Bulletin, Sept. 23, 1907.



BIJOU Theatre

Second door north of post office.

Entire Change of Program Monday and Thursday

Continuous Performance 3 to 5 p.m., 8 to 11 p.m

Admission 15; Children Afternoons 10c

PROGRAMME.

1
Overture—R. V. HAINSWORTH

2
The Bank Defaulter
The inside story of the Looting of a Great Bank Defaulter by its Official.

3
JOHN HALL
The Famous Baritone

4
The Mysterious Accordion

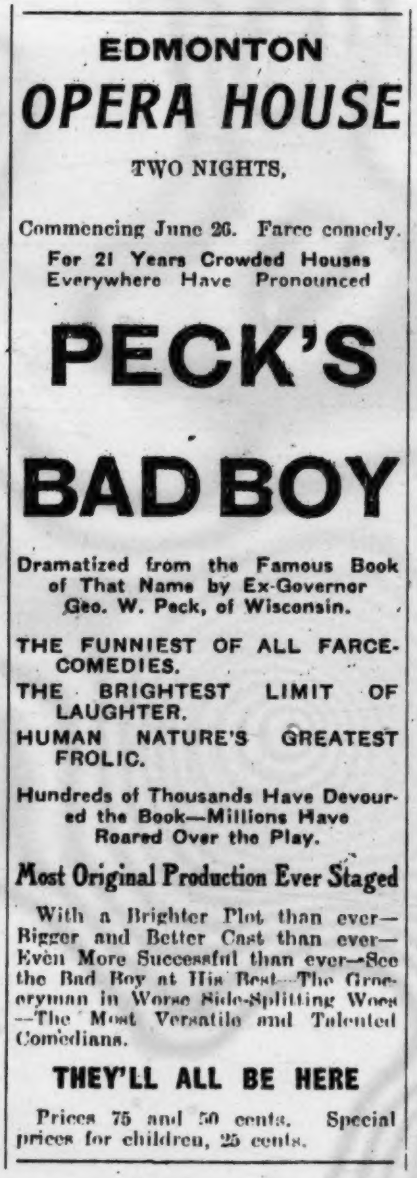
5
MISS GEORGIE FRANKLIN
will sing
"Id like to know your address and your name"

6
Nobody Works Like Father

MISS HAZEL WINN
will sing
"Marincia"

Don't Forget Daily Matinees 3:30 to 5

Edmonton Bulletin, June 27, 1907.



EDMONTON
OPERA HOUSE

TWO NIGHTS,

Commencing June 26. Farce comedy.

For 21 Years Crowded Houses Everywhere Have Pronounced

PECK'S BAD BOY

Dramatized from the Famous Book of That Name by Ex-Governor Geo. W. Peck, of Wisconsin.

THE FUNNIEST OF ALL FARCE-COMEDIES.

THE BRIGHTEST LIMIT OF LAUGHTER.

HUMAN NATURE'S GREATEST FROLIC.

Hundreds of Thousands Have Devoured the Book—Millions Have Roared Over the Play.

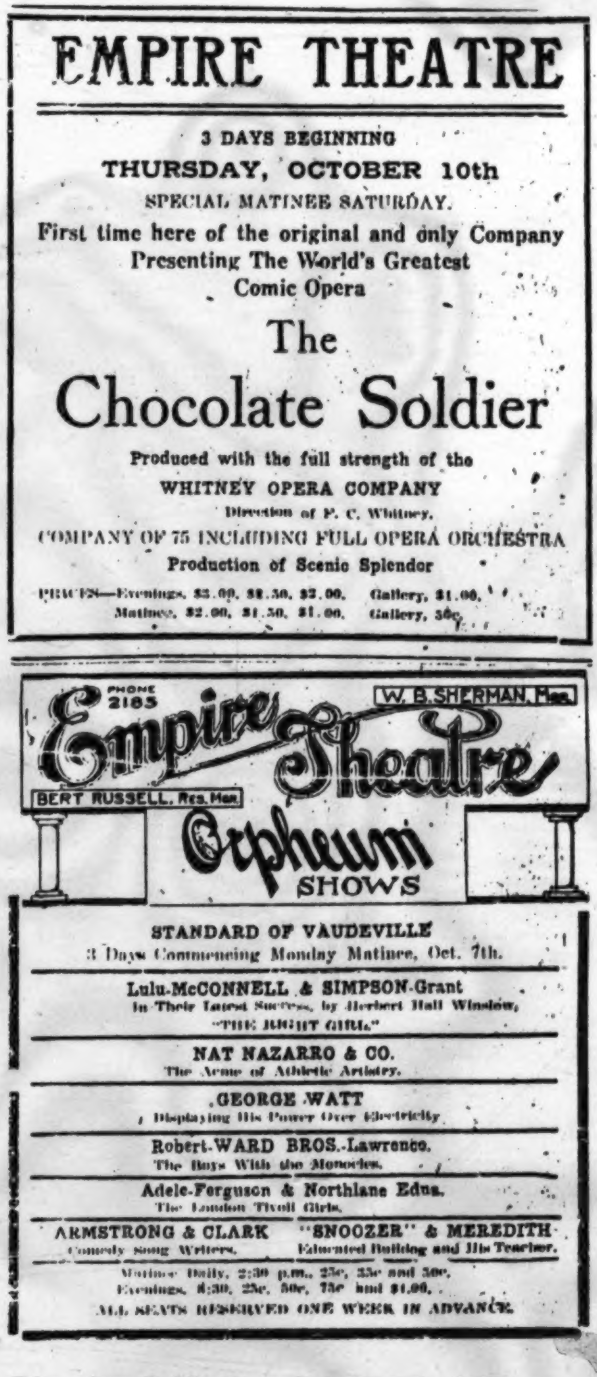
Most Original Production Ever Staged

With a Brighter Plot than ever—Bigger and Better Cast than ever—Even More Successful than ever—See the Bad Boy at His Best—The Groceryman in Worse Side-Splitting Woes—The Most Versatile and Talented Comedians.

THEY'LL ALL BE HERE

Prices 75 and 50 cents. Special prices for children, 25 cents.

Edmonton Bulletin, June 27, 1907.



EMPIRE THEATRE

3 DAYS BEGINNING

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10th

SPECIAL MATINEE SATURDAY.

**First time here of the original and only Company
Presenting The World's Greatest
Comic Opera**

The
Chocolate Soldier

Produced with the full strength of the

WHITNEY OPERA COMPANY

Direction of F. C. Whitney.

COMPANY OF 75 INCLUDING FULL OPERA ORCHESTRA

Production of Scenic Splendor

PRICES—Evenings, $3.00, $2.50, $2.00. Gallery, $1.00.
Matinee, $2.00, $1.50, $1.00. Gallery, 50c.

PHONE 2185

W. B. SHERMAN, Mgr.

Empire Theatre

BERT RUSSELL, Res. Mgr.

Orpheum SHOWS

STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

3 Days Commencing Monday Matinee, Oct. 7th.

Lulu-McCONNELL & SIMPSON-Grant
In Their Latest Success, by Herbert Hall Winslow,
"THE RIGHT GIRL."

NAT NAZARRO & CO.
The Acme of Athletic Artistry.

GEORGE WATT
Displaying His Power Over Electricity

Robert-WARD BROS.-Lawrence.
The Boys With the Monocles.

Adele-Ferguson & Northlane Edna.
The London Tivoli Girls.

ARMSTRONG & CLARK
Comedy Song Writers.

"SNOOZER" & MEREDITH
Educated Bulldog and His Teacher.

Matinee Daily, 2:30 p.m., 25c, 35c and 50c.
Evenings, 8:30, 25c, 50c, 75c and $1.00.
ALL SEATS RESERVED ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE.

Edmonton Bulletin, October 5, 1912.

W. B. SHERMAN

Empire Theatre

Orpheum Shows

THE STANDARD OF VAUDEVILLE

PHONE 2183

ONE DAY ONLY

Monday Matinee and Night, Jan. 13, 1913, Most Stupendous Event in Vaudeville.

Martin Beck Offers

Madame Sarah Bernhardt

And Her Company of French Players in Vaudeville,

ALSO A PERFECT VARIETY BILL.

A Dramatic Novelty,

"And They Lived Happy Ever After"

Chas. and Fanny Van and Company in a New Laughialogue.

Josie Heather, the Winsome English Comedienne.

McMahon, Diamond and Clemence—"The Scare-Crow."

Matinee, $2, $1.50, $1 and 50c.
Evening, $3, $2.50, $2 and $1.

Seats on Sale Monday, January 6.
MATINEE at 2:30—$2, $1.50, $1, 50c.
EVENING at 8:30—$3, $2.50, $2, $1.

LYCEUM THEATRE

Edmonton's Only Stock Playhouse.

Phone 1813. Jasper Avenue.

TONIGHT

And All Week,

"The Winnipeg Stock Company" Present Harold McGrath's Best Work,

"THE MAN ON THE BOX"

The Best Show in Town for the Money

Evenings—25c, 35c, 50c.
Wednesday and Saturday Matinees—Children, 15c; Adults, 25c.
Next Week—"The Travelling Salesman

ENTERTAINMENTS

PREPARE FOR GREAT ACTRESS.

When Madame Sarah Bernhardt arrives at the Empire theatre this morning after a day and a half spent on her special train from Winnipeg, she will find that even if Edmonton is not equipped with the best theatre in Canada, that the stage hands can frame up one of the coziest dressing rooms in any theatre in Western Canada when a real celebrity arrives here.

Stage Carpenter Arthur Houghton worked all Saturday night arranging every little detail for the comfort of the Divine Sarah. It is not often that a star has a dressing room on the stage, most of the artists being required to delve into those mysterious regions below the stage to make their changes. Lily Langtry was the last one to play at the Empire who had a palatial improvised dressing room upstairs, but in comparison with the room prepared for the great Frenchwoman, the Jersey Lily's was as a discarded homesteader's shack to a millionaire's mansion.

Four of the largest and best sets of scenery used at the Empire have been made into a large room, enclosed on all sides, equipped with a door in front, a small hall leading to the door, and the hallway covered by elaborate draperies. A peep at the interior of the room reveals a myriad of incandescents on all sides of the room. A large dressing table with a tall mirror is placed at one side of the room, with five Tungsten lights surrounding the mirror. A bureau decorates another side of the room, and a couch occupies one corner, while a mahogany clothes chest separates the two. This is equipped with a manicuring outfit, and hairdressing articles. Above the couch are six large Tungsten lights that are operated from a switch at one side of the room. Behind the couch and dressing table are two steam radiators that will keep the madame comfortable during her brief stay at the theatre, while a carpet one inch in thickness will insure her feet against any wintry blasts that may steal into her royal presence.

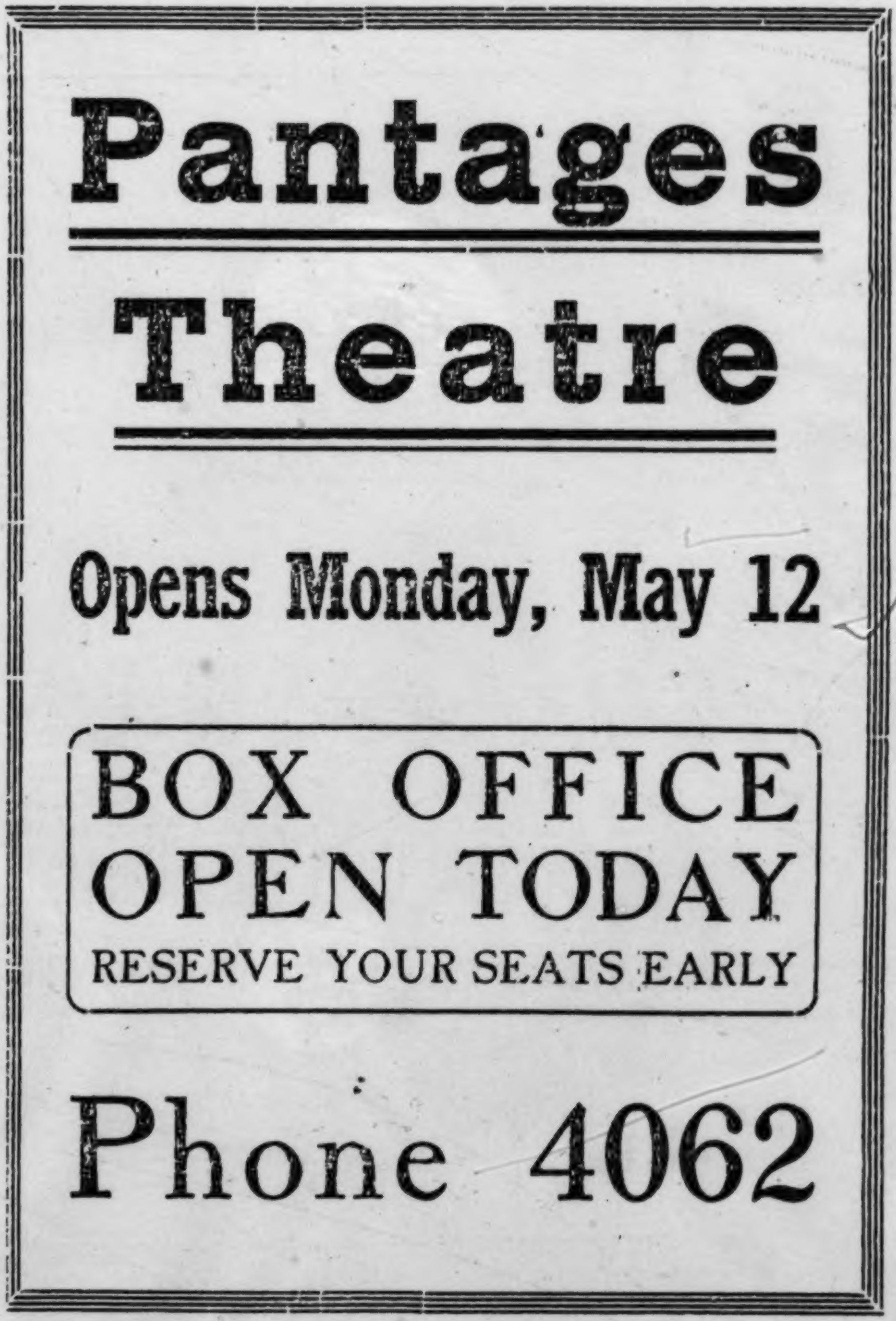
The fifth act from "Camille" will be played at the matinee this afternoon and tonight. The other acts on the bill consist of a sketch entitled "And They Lived Happily Ever After," played by seven people; Charles and Fanny Van in "From Stage Carpenter to Actor;" Josie Heather, the dainty English singing comedienne; Saranoff, the gypsy violinist, and McMahon, Diamond and Clemence, in a big laughing hit, "The Scarecrow."

Edmonton Bulletin, January 9, 1913.

POOR PRINT
Epreuve illisible

APPENDIX B.

PANTAGES THEATRE PLAYBILL ADVERTISEMENTS,
MAY 8, 1913 TO MARCH 31, 1921,
AND PANTAGES THEATRE PROGRAM FOR WEEK BEGINNING
JUNE 19, 1919.



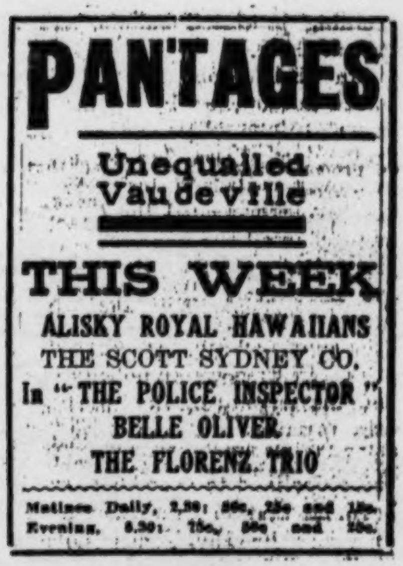
Pantages Theatre

Opens Monday, May 12

BOX OFFICE
OPEN TODAY
RESERVE YOUR SEATS EARLY

Phone 4062

Edmonton Bulletin, May 8, 1913.



PANTAGES

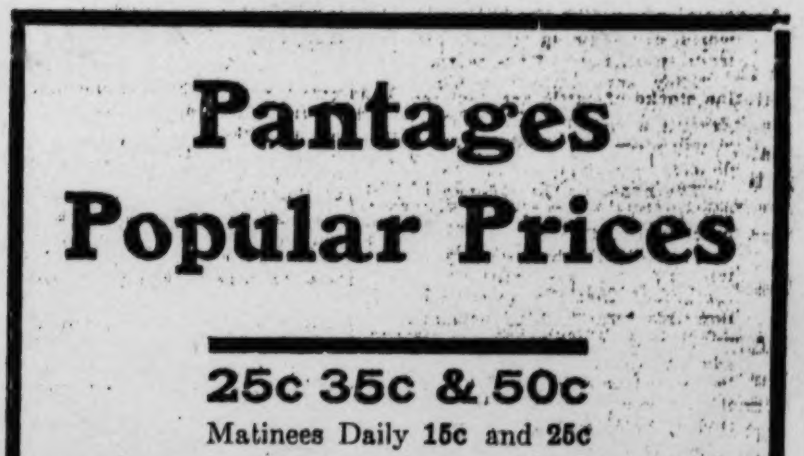
Unequalled Vaudeville

THIS WEEK

ALISKY ROYAL HAWAIIANS
THE SCOTT SYDNEY CO.
In "THE POLICE INSPECTOR"
BELLE OLIVER
THE FLORENZ TRIO

Matinee Daily, 2.30: 50c, 25c and 15c.
Evening, 8.30: 75c, 50c and 25c.

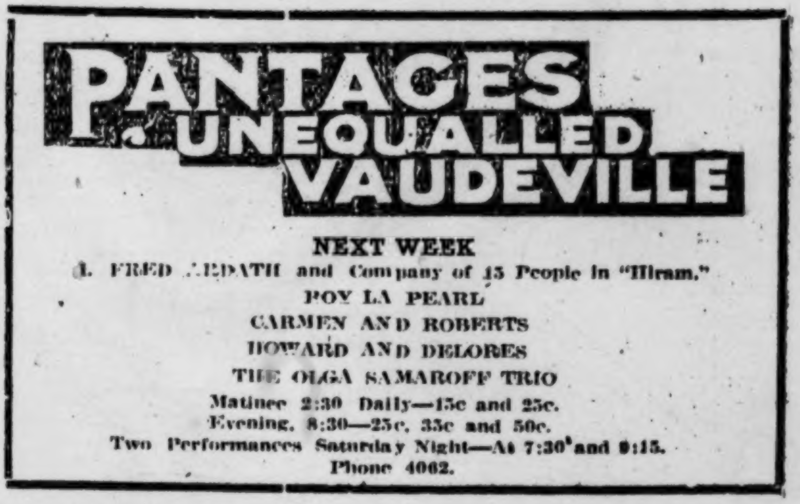
Edmonton Bulletin, May 14, 1913.



Pantages
Popular Prices

25c 35c & 50c
Matinees Daily 15c and 25c

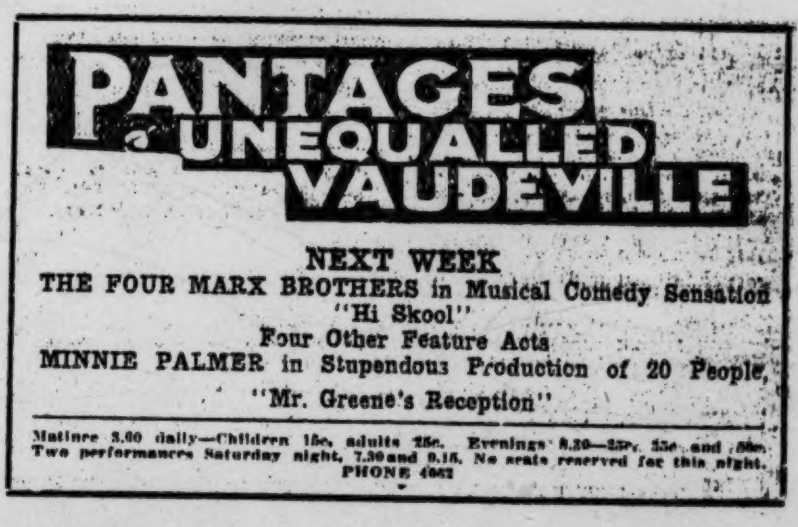
Edmonton Bulletin, May 19, 1913.



PANTAGES
UNEQUALLED
VAUDEVILLE

NEXT WEEK
J. FRED ARDATH and Company of 15 People in "Hiram."
ROY LA PEARL
CARMEN AND ROBERTS
HOWARD AND DELORES
THE OLGA SAMAROFF TRIO
Matinee 2:30 Daily—15c and 25c.
Evening, 8:30—25c, 35c and 50c.
Two Performances Saturday Night—At 7:30 and 9:15.
Phone 4062.

Edmonton Bulletin, May 24, 1913.

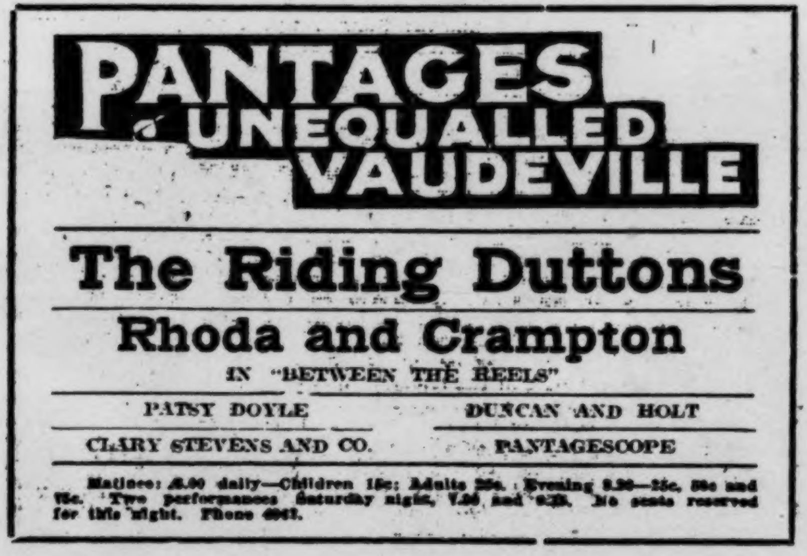


PANTAGES
UNEQUALLED
VAUDEVILLE

NEXT WEEK
THE FOUR MARX BROTHERS in Musical Comedy Sensation
"Hi Skool"
Four Other Feature Acts
MINNIE PALMER in Stupendous Production of 20 People,
"Mr. Greene's Reception"

Matinee 3.00 daily—Children 15c, adults 25c. Evenings 8.30—25c, 35c and 50c.
Two performances Saturday night, 7.30 and 9.15. No seats reserved for this night.
PHONE 4062

Edmonton Bulletin, August 11, 1913.



PANTAGES UNEQUALLED VAUDEVILLE

The Riding Duttons

Rhoda and Crampton

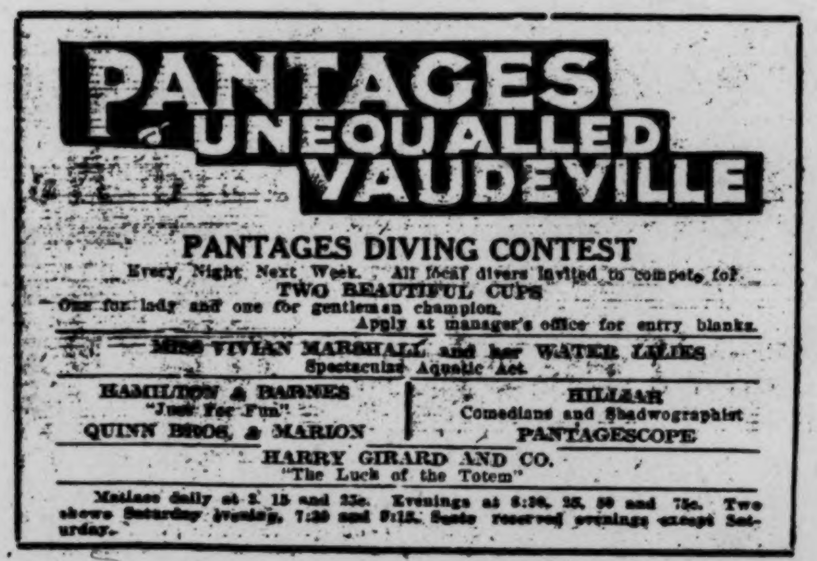
IN "BETWEEN THE REELS"

PATSY DOYLE — DUNCAN AND HOLT

CLARY STEVENS AND CO. — PANTAGESCOPE

Matinee: [illegible] daily—Children 15c; Adults 25c. Evening 8.30—25c, 50c and 75c. Two performances Saturday night, 7.00 and 9.15. No seats reserved for this night. Phone [illegible].

Edmonton Bulletin, January 24, 1914.



PANTAGES UNEQUALLED VAUDEVILLE

PANTAGES DIVING CONTEST

Every Night Next Week. All local divers invited to compete for

TWO BEAUTIFUL CUPS

One for lady and one for gentleman champion.

Apply at manager's office for entry blanks.

MISS VIVIAN MARSHALL and her WATER LILIES
Spectacular Aquatic Act

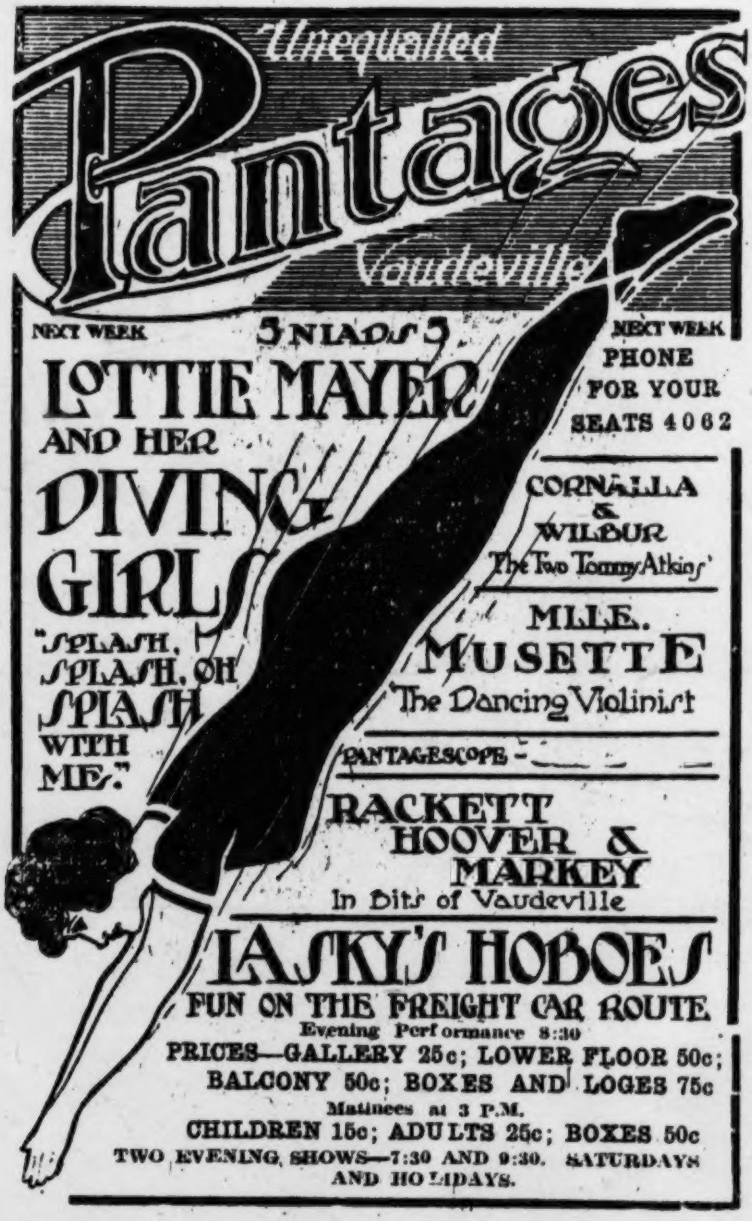
HAMILTON & BARNES
"Just for Fun"
QUINN BROS. & MARION

HILLIAR
Comedians and Shadwographist
PANTAGESCOPE

HARRY GIRARD AND CO.
"The Luck of the Totem"

Matinee daily at 2.15 and 25c. Evenings at 8:30, 25, 50 and 75c. Two shows Saturday evening, 7:30 and 9:15. Seats reserved evenings except Saturday.

Edmonton Bulletin, December 5, 1914.



Unequalled
Pantages
Vaudeville

NEXT WEEK

5 NIADS 5

LOTTIE MAYER
AND HER
DIVING
GIRLS
"SPLASH, SPLASH, OH SPLASH WITH ME."

NEXT WEEK
PHONE FOR YOUR SEATS 4062

CORNALLA & WILBUR
The Two Tommy Atkins'

MLLE. MUSETTE
The Dancing Violinist

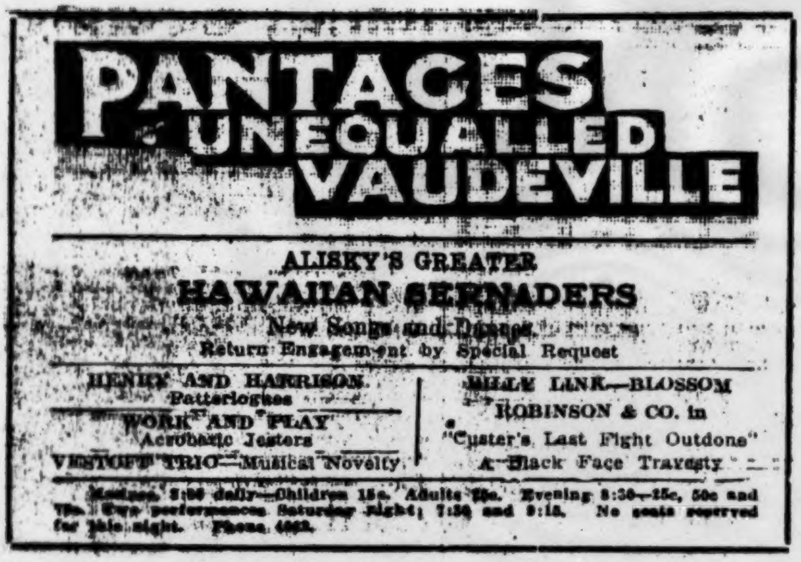
PANTAGESCOPE

RACKETT HOOVER & MARKEY
In Bits of Vaudeville

LASKY'S HOBOES
FUN ON THE FREIGHT CAR ROUTE

Evening Performance 8:30
PRICES—GALLERY 25c; LOWER FLOOR 50c; BALCONY 50c; BOXES AND LOGES 75c
Matinees at 3 P.M.
CHILDREN 15c; ADULTS 25c; BOXES 50c
TWO EVENING SHOWS—7:30 AND 9:30. SATURDAYS AND HOLIDAYS.

Edmonton Bulletin, March 16, 1914.



PANTAGES
UNEQUALLED
VAUDEVILLE

ALISKY'S GREATER
HAWAIIAN SERENADERS
New Songs and Dances
Return Engagement by Special Request

HENRY AND HARRISON
Patterlogues

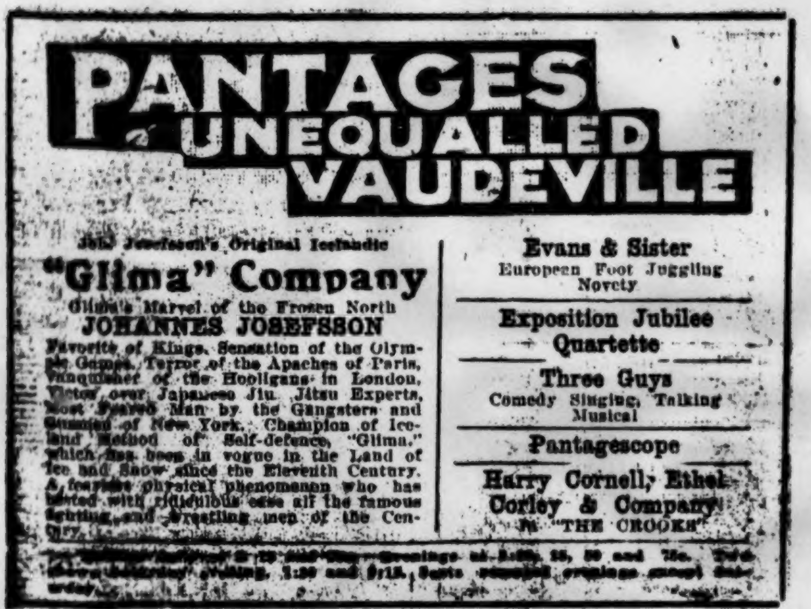
"WORK" AND "PLAY"
Acrobatic Jesters

VESTOFF TRIO—Musical Novelty

BILLY LINK—BLOSSOM ROBINSON & CO. in
"Custer's Last Fight Outdone"
A Black Face Travesty

Matinee 2:30 daily—Children 15c. Adults 25c. Evening 8:30—25c, 50c and 75c. Two performances Saturday night; 7:30 and 9:15. No seats reserved for this night. Phone 4062.

Edmonton Bulletin, August 22, 1914.



PANTAGES
UNEQUALLED
VAUDEVILLE

John Josefsson's Original Icelandic
"Glima" Company
Glima's Marvel of the Frozen North
JOHANNES JOSEFSSON
Favorite of Kings, Sensation of the Olympic Games, Terror of the Apaches of Paris, Vanquisher of the Hooligans in London, Victor over Japanese Jiu Jitsu Experts, Most Feared Man by the Gangsters and Gunmen of New York. Champion of Iceland Method of Self-defence, "Glima," which has been in vogue in the Land of Ice and Snow since the Eleventh Century. A fearless physical phenomenon who has bested with ridiculous ease all the famous fighting and wrestling men of the Century.

Evans & Sister
European Foot Juggling Novelty

Exposition Jubilee Quartette

Three Guys
Comedy Singing, Talking Musical

Pantagescope

Harry Cornell, Ethel Corley & Company
in "THE CROOKS"

[illegible] 2:30 [illegible]—Evenings at 8:30, 25, 50 and 75c. Two [illegible] Saturday evening, 7:30 and 9:15. Seats reserved evenings except Saturday.

Edmonton Bulletin, December 12, 1914.

POOR PRINT
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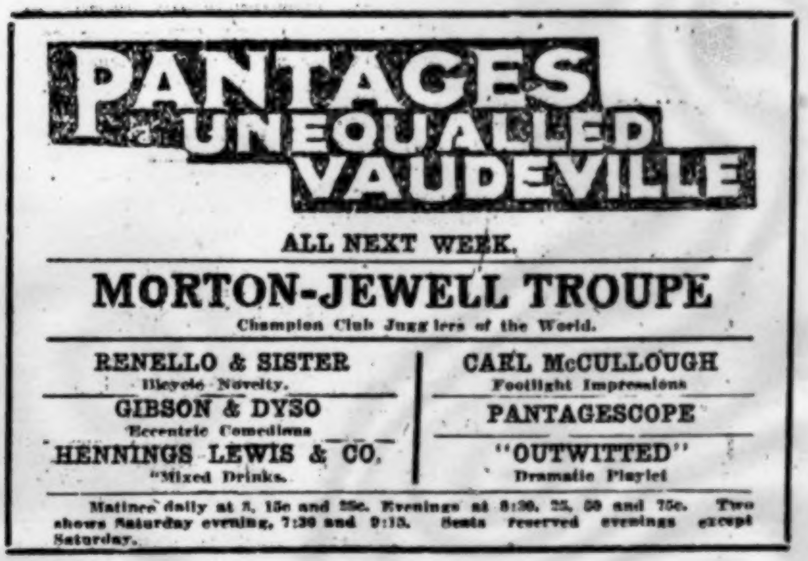


PANTAGES

UNEQUALLED VAUDEVILLE

ALL NEXT WEEK.

MORTON-JEWELL TROUPE

Champion Club Jugglers of the World.

RENELLO & SISTER
Bicycle Novelty.

GIBSON & DYSO
Eccentric Comediens

HENNINGS LEWIS & CO.
"Mixed Drinks.

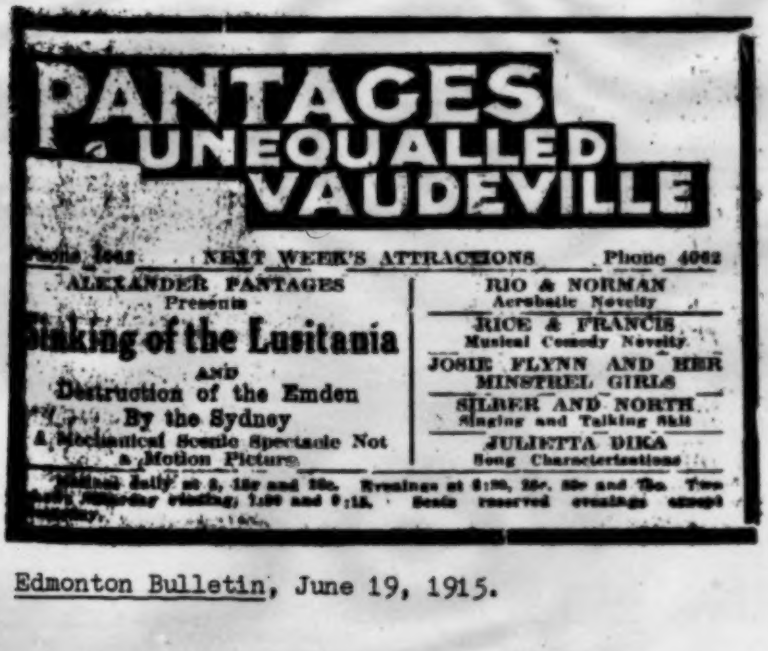
CARL McCULLOUGH
Footlight Impressions

PANTAGESCOPE

"OUTWITTED"
Dramatic Playlet

Matinee daily at 3, 15c and 25c. Evenings at 8:30, 25, 50 and 75c. Two shows Saturday evening, 7:30 and 9:15. Seats reserved evenings except Saturday.

Edmonton Bulletin, January 30, 1915.



PANTAGES

UNEQUALLED VAUDEVILLE

Phone 4062 NEXT WEEK'S ATTRACTIONS Phone 4062

ALEXANDER PANTAGES
Presents
Sinking of the Lusitania
AND
Destruction of the Emden
By the Sydney
A Mechanical Scenic Spectacle Not a Motion Picture

RIO & NORMAN
Acrobatic Novelty

RICE & FRANCIS
Musical Comedy Novelty

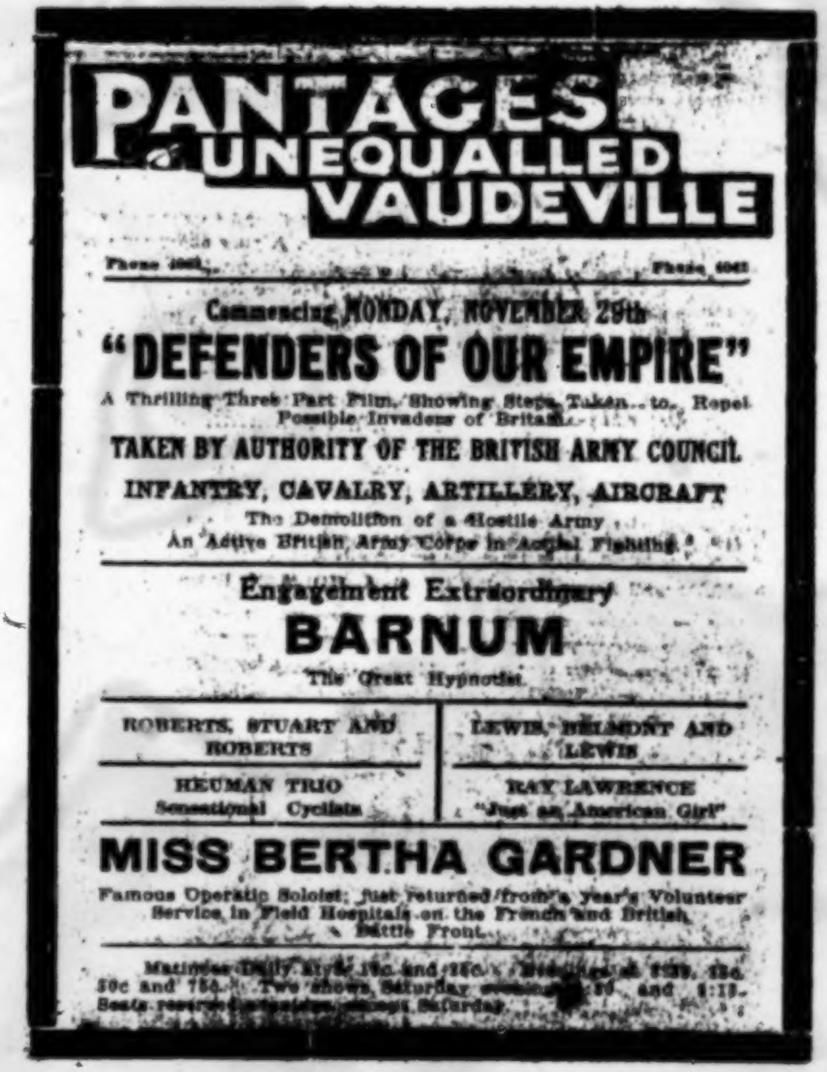
JOSIE FLYNN AND HER MINSTREL GIRLS

SILBER AND NORTH
Singing and Talking Skit

JULIETTA DIKA
Song Characterizations

Matinee daily at 3, 15c and 25c. Evenings at 8:30, 25c, 50c and 75c. Two shows Saturday evening, 7:30 and 9:15. Seats reserved evenings except Saturday.

Edmonton Bulletin, June 19, 1915.



PANTAGES UNEQUALLED VAUDEVILLE

Phone [illegible] Phone [illegible]

Commencing MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29th

"DEFENDERS OF OUR EMPIRE"

A Thrilling Three Part Film, Showing Steps Taken to Repel Possible Invaders of Britain.

TAKEN BY AUTHORITY OF THE BRITISH ARMY COUNCIL

INFANTRY, CAVALRY, ARTILLERY, AIRCRAFT

The Demolition of a Hostile Army

An Active British Army Corps in Actual Fighting

Engagement Extraordinary

BARNUM

The Great Hypnotist

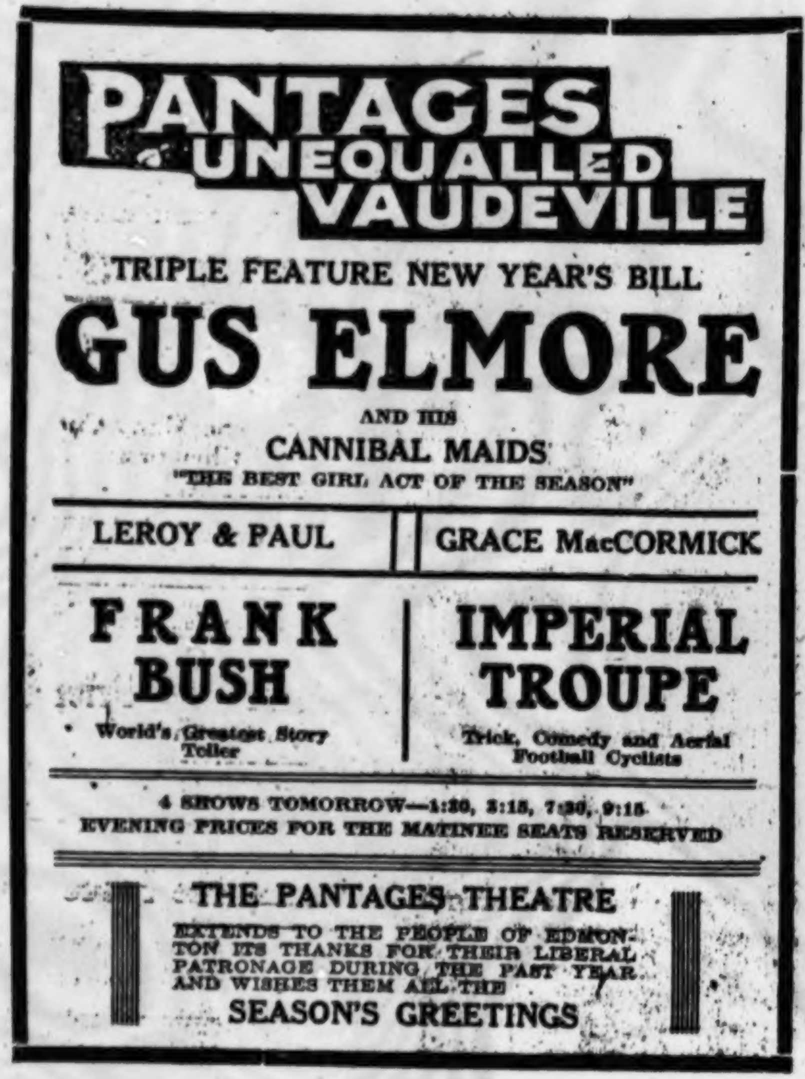
ROBERTS, STUART AND ROBERTS	LEWIS, BELMONT AND LEWIS
HEUMAN TRIO Sensational Cyclists	RAY LAWRENCE "Just an American Girl"

MISS BERTHA GARDNER

Famous Operatic Soloist; just returned from a year's Volunteer Service in Field Hospitals on the French and British Battle Front.

Matinees Daily [illegible] 15c and 25c. [illegible] 15c, 50c and 75c. Two shows Saturday [illegible] and [illegible]. Seats reserved [illegible] except Saturday.

Edmonton Bulletin, November 27, 1915.



PANTAGES
UNEQUALLED VAUDEVILLE

TRIPLE FEATURE NEW YEAR'S BILL

GUS ELMORE

AND HIS

CANNIBAL MAIDS

"THE BEST GIRL ACT OF THE SEASON"

LEROY & PAUL

GRACE MacCORMICK

FRANK BUSH

World's Greatest Story Teller

IMPERIAL TROUPE

Trick, Comedy and Aerial Football Cyclists

4 SHOWS TOMORROW—1:30, 3:15, 7:30, 9:15

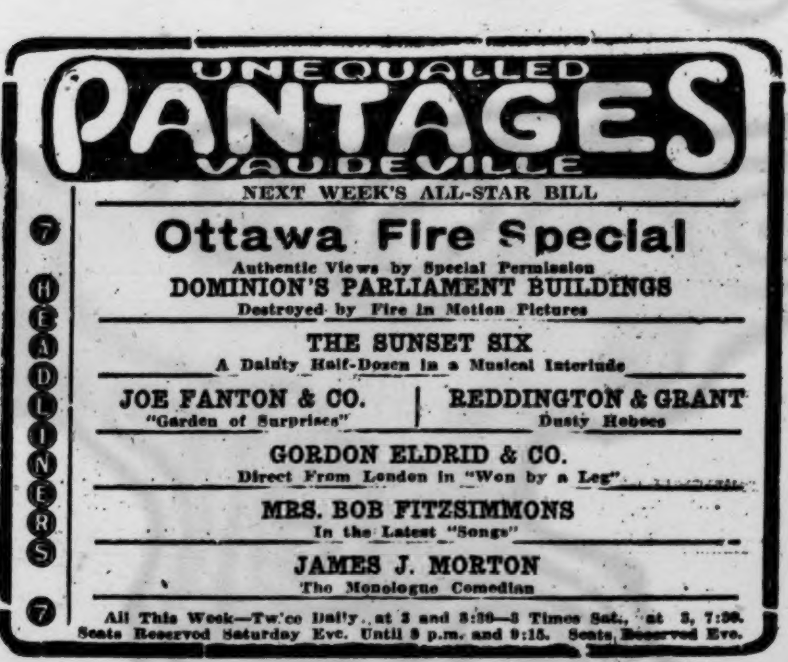
EVENING PRICES FOR THE MATINEE SEATS RESERVED

THE PANTAGES THEATRE

EXTENDS TO THE PEOPLE OF EDMONTON ITS THANKS FOR THEIR LIBERAL PATRONAGE DURING THE PAST YEAR AND WISHES THEM ALL THE

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Edmonton Bulletin, December 25, 1915.



UNEQUALLED
PANTAGES
VAUDEVILLE

NEXT WEEK'S ALL-STAR BILL

7 HEADLINERS 7

Ottawa Fire Special
Authentic Views by Special Permission
DOMINION'S PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS
Destroyed by Fire in Motion Pictures

THE SUNSET SIX
A Dainty Half-Dozen in a Musical Interlude

JOE FANTON & CO.
"Garden of Surprises"

REDDINGTON & GRANT
Dusty Hoboes

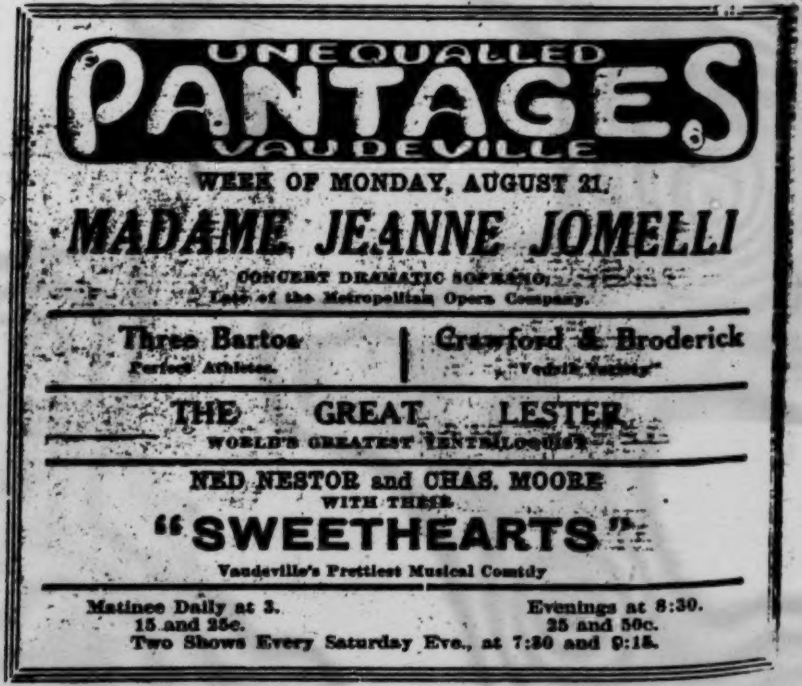
GORDON ELDRID & CO.
Direct From London in "Won by a Leg"

MRS. BOB FITZSIMMONS
In the Latest "Songs"

JAMES J. MORTON
The Monologue Comedian

All This Week—Twice Daily, at 3 and 8:30—3 Times Sat., at 3, 7:30.
Seats Reserved Saturday Eve. Until 8 p.m. and 9:15. Seats Reserved Eve.

Edmonton Bulletin, March 4, 1916.



UNEQUALLED
PANTAGES
VAUDEVILLE

WEEK OF MONDAY, AUGUST 21.

MADAME JEANNE JOMELLI
CONCERT DRAMATIC SOPRANO,
Late of the Metropolitan Opera Company.

Three Bartos
Perfect Athletes.

Crawford & Broderick
"[illegible]"

THE GREAT LESTER
WORLD'S GREATEST VENTRILOQUIST

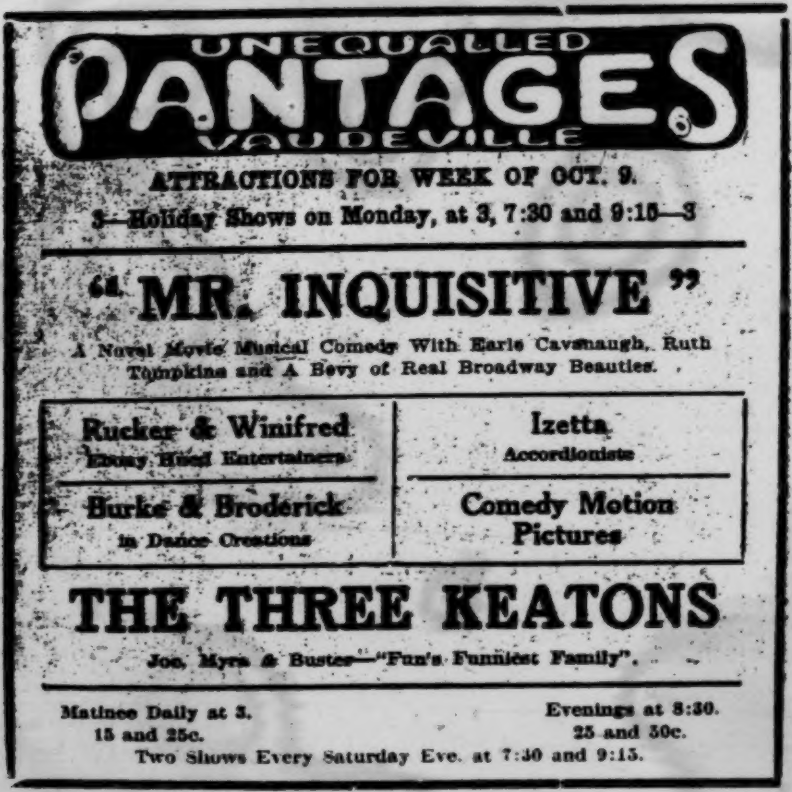
NED NESTOR and CHAS. MOORE
WITH THEIR
"SWEETHEARTS"
Vaudeville's Prettiest Musical Comedy

Matinee Daily at 3.
15 and 25c.

Evenings at 8:30.
25 and 50c.

Two Shows Every Saturday Eve., at 7:30 and 9:15.

Edmonton Bulletin, August 19, 1916.



UNEQUALLED
PANTAGES
VAUDEVILLE

ATTRACTIONS FOR WEEK OF OCT. 9.
3—Holiday Shows on Monday, at 3, 7:30 and 9:15—3

"MR. INQUISITIVE"

A Novel Movie Musical Comedy With Earle Cavanaugh, Ruth Tompkins and A Bevy of Real Broadway Beauties.

Rucker & Winifred Ebony Hued Entertainers	**Izetta** Accordionists
Burke & Broderick in Dance Creations	**Comedy Motion Pictures**

THE THREE KEATONS

Joe, Myra & Buster—"Fun's Funniest Family".

Matinee Daily at 3.
15 and 25c.

Evenings at 8:30.
25 and 50c.

Two Shows Every Saturday Eve. at 7:30 and 9:15.

Edmonton Bulletin, October 7, 1916.

PANTAGES

A LL NEXT WEEK

Hillam, Brown and Raginetti
Present

**HONG KONG
GIRLS**

A Musical Comedy Chop Suey

***Three Symphony
Maids***

The Musical Treat

**Stagpoole
and Spier**

Surprise Duo

***Harry Antrim
and Betsy Vale***

The Superb Ventriloqual
Originals

**FRANK GABY
and Company**

The Bewildering Athletes

10 BEN ZONG QUOGHS 10

Whirlwind Athletes

12TH EPISODE OF

***"Pearl of
the Army"***

Edmonton Bulletin, April 21, 1917.

PANTAGES

All Next Week

George Choos Presents

**"Hello
Japan"**

In Two Acts

Clever Comedians — Continuous Laughter — Gorgeous Costumes — Excellent Singing — Delightful Girls

**D'Amour and
Douglas**

ACROBATICS

**The University
Four**

**Will & Mary
Rogers**

*In "It Didn't Take
The First Time"*

By Felix Adler

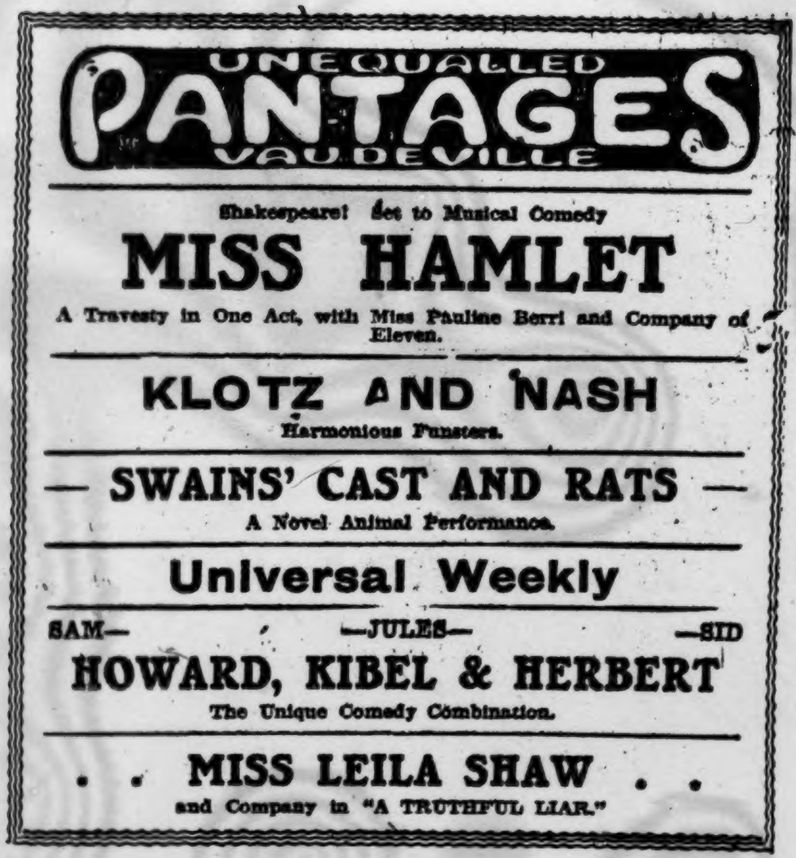
Herbert Brooks

Vaudeville's Great
Mystifier

13th Episode of

'Pearl of The Army'

Edmonton Bulletin, April 28, 1917.



UNEQUALLED

PANTAGES

VAUDEVILLE

Shakespeare! Set to Musical Comedy

MISS HAMLET

A Travesty in One Act, with Miss Pauline Berri and Company of Eleven.

KLOTZ AND NASH

Harmonious Funsters.

— SWAINS' CAST AND RATS —

A Novel Animal Performance.

Universal Weekly

SAM— —JULES— —SID

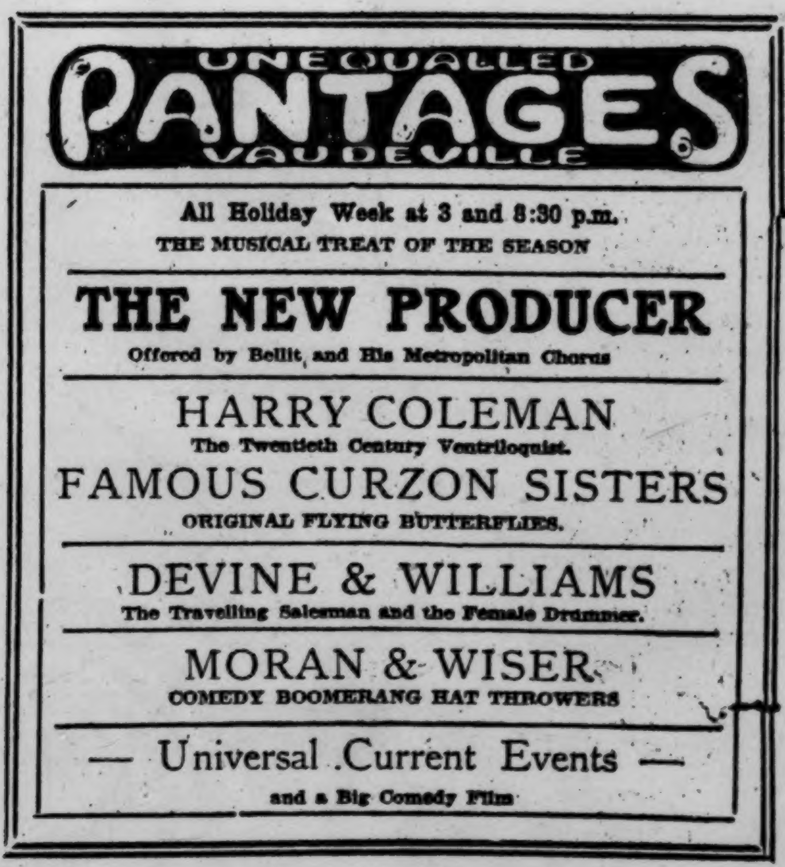
HOWARD, KIBEL & HERBERT

The Unique Comedy Combination.

. . MISS LEILA SHAW . .

and Company in "A TRUTHFUL LIAR."

Edmonton Bulletin, May 26, 1917.



UNEQUALLED

PANTAGES

VAUDEVILLE

All Holiday Week at 3 and 8:30 p.m.

THE MUSICAL TREAT OF THE SEASON

THE NEW PRODUCER

Offered by Bellit and His Metropolitan Chorus

HARRY COLEMAN

The Twentieth Century Ventriloquist.

FAMOUS CURZON SISTERS

ORIGINAL FLYING BUTTERFLIES.

DEVINE & WILLIAMS

The Travelling Salesman and the Female Drummer.

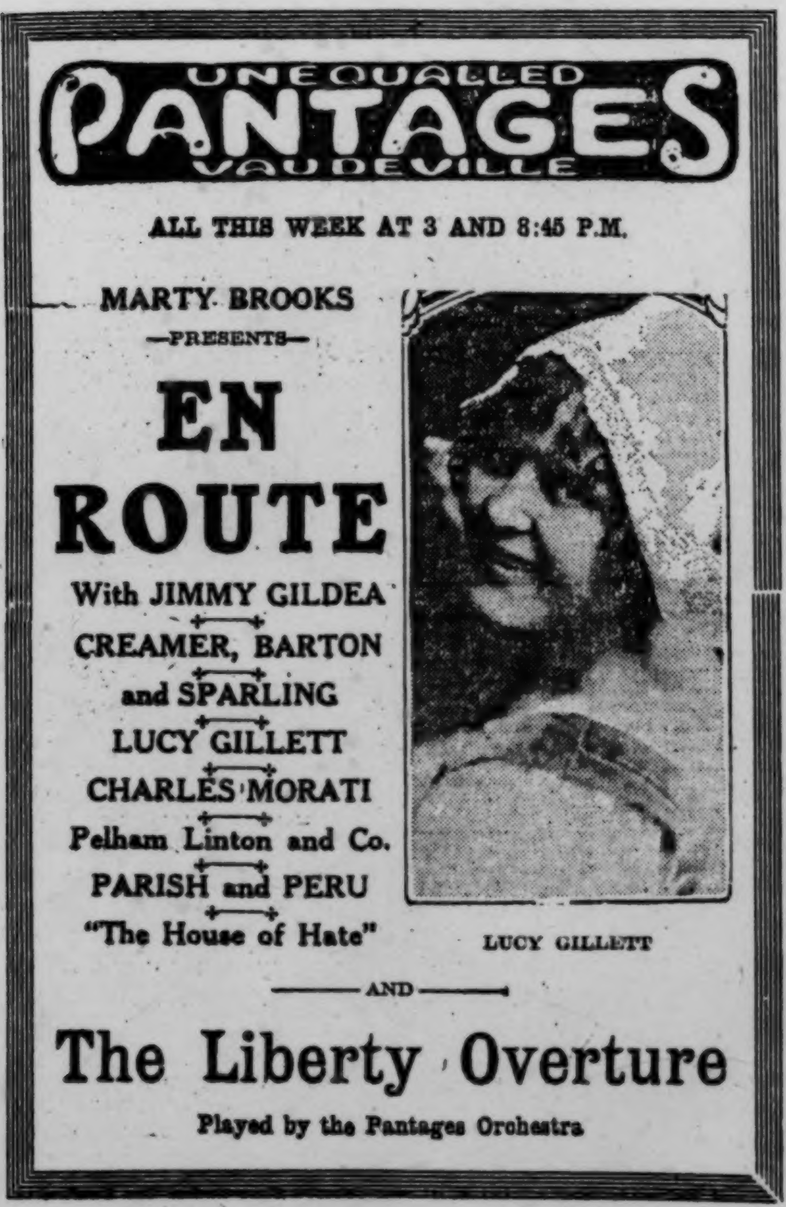
MORAN & WISER

COMEDY BOOMERANG HAT THROWERS

— Universal Current Events —

and a Big Comedy Film

Edmonton Bulletin, June 30, 1917.



UNEQUALLED

PANTAGES

VAUDEVILLE

ALL THIS WEEK AT 3 AND 8:45 P.M.

MARTY BROOKS

—PRESENTS—

EN ROUTE

With JIMMY GILDEA

CREAMER, BARTON and SPARLING

LUCY GILLETT

CHARLES MORATI

Pelham Linton and Co.

PARISH and PERU

"The House of Hate"

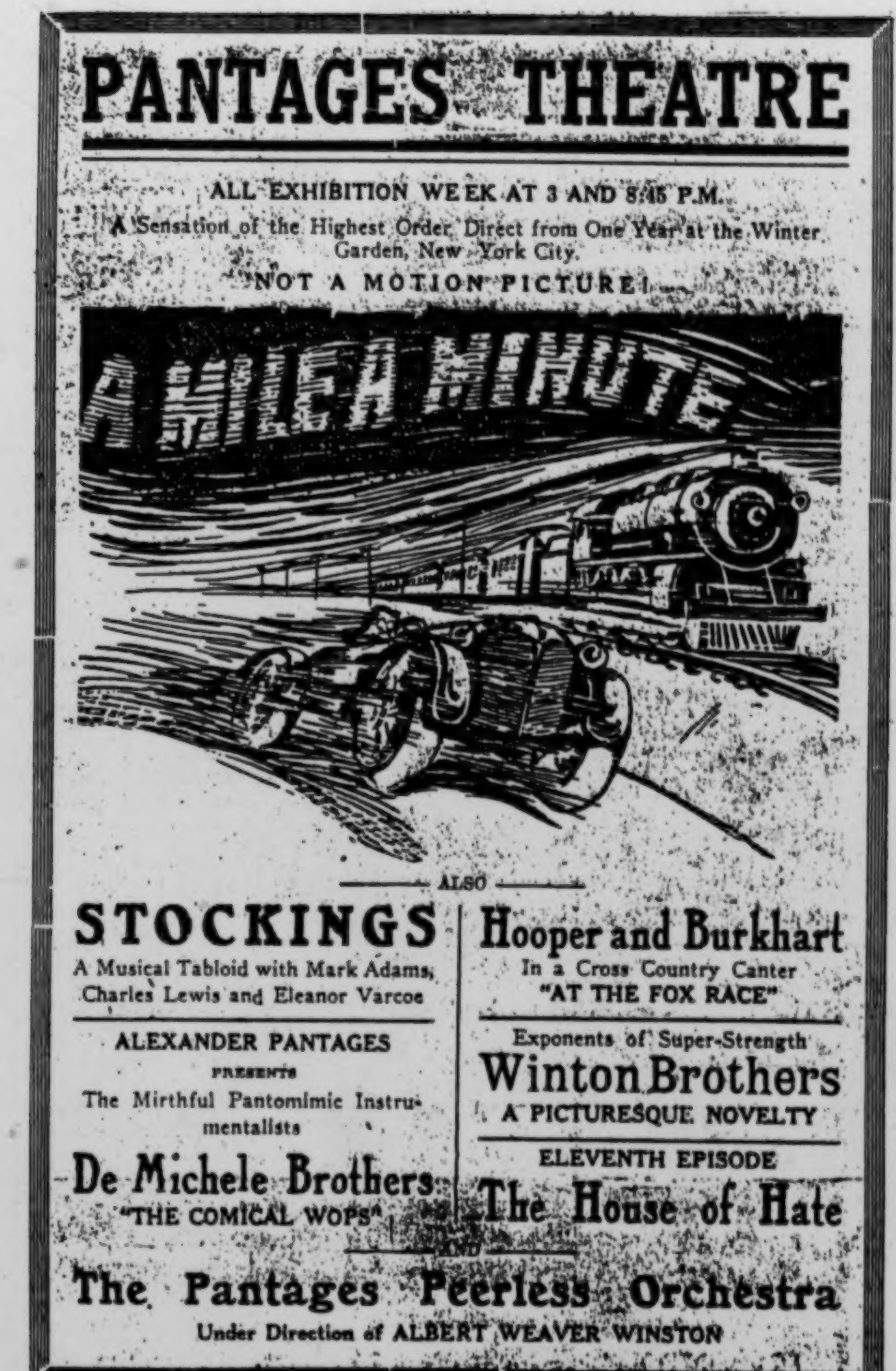
LUCY GILLETT

—AND—

The Liberty Overture

Played by the Pantages Orchestra

Edmonton Bulletin, July 2, 1918.



PANTAGES THEATRE

ALL EXHIBITION WEEK AT 3 AND 8:15 P.M.

A Sensation of the Highest Order Direct from One Year at the Winter Garden, New York City.

NOT A MOTION PICTURE!

A MILE A MINUTE

ALSO

STOCKINGS

A Musical Tabloid with Mark Adams, Charles Lewis and Eleanor Varcoe

Hooper and Burkhart

In a Cross Country Canter
"AT THE FOX RACE"

ALEXANDER PANTAGES
PRESENTS
The Mirthful Pantomimic Instrumentalists

De Michele Brothers

"THE COMICAL WOPS"

Exponents of Super-Strength

Winton Brothers

A PICTURESQUE NOVELTY

ELEVENTH EPISODE

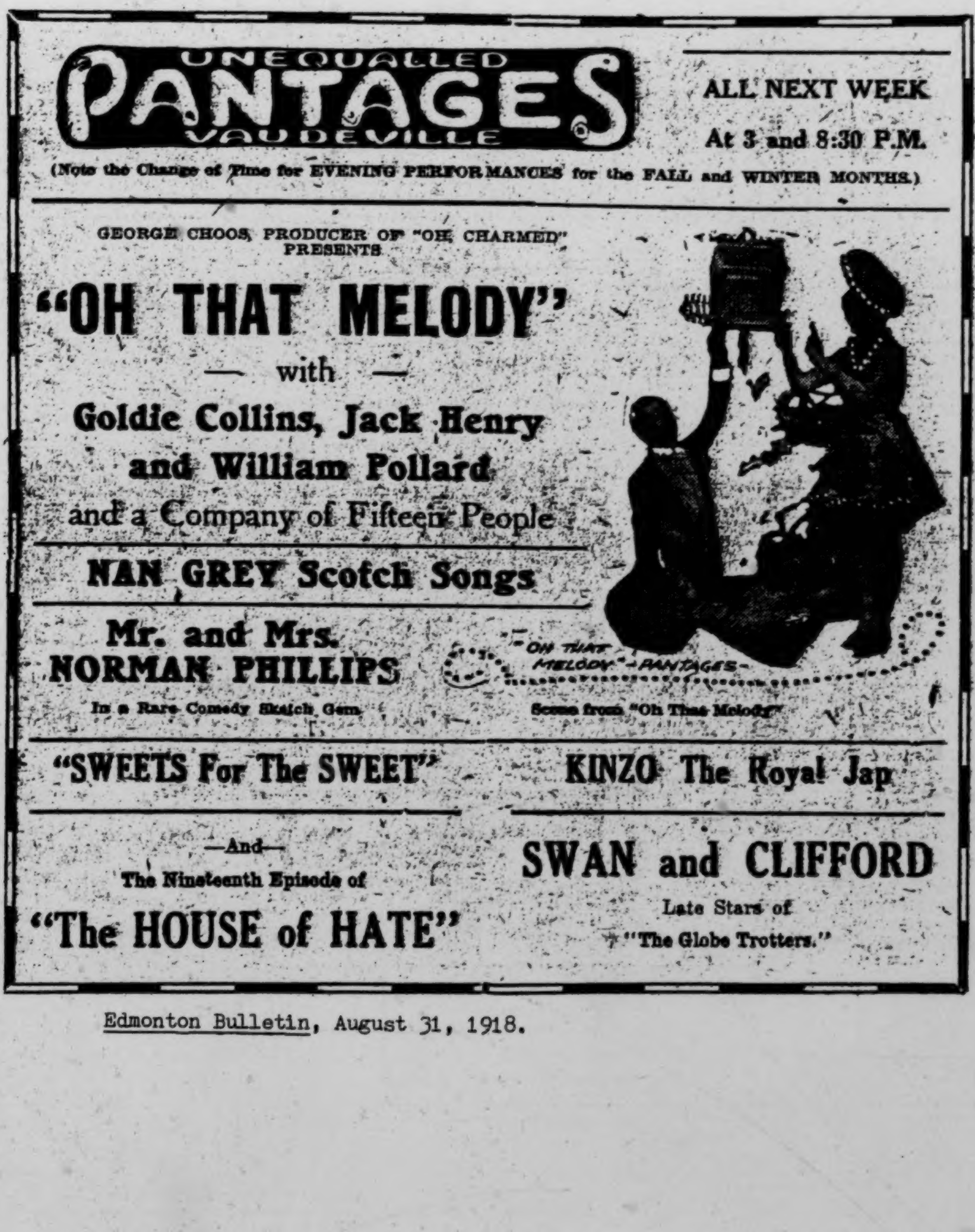
The House of Hate

AND

The Pantages Peerless Orchestra

Under Direction of ALBERT WEAVER WINSTON

Edmonton Bulletin, July 6, 1918.


OH THAT MELODY - PANTAGES -

UNEQUALLED
PANTAGES
VAUDEVILLE

ALL NEXT WEEK
At 3 and 8:30 P.M.

(Note the Change of Time for EVENING PERFORMANCES for the FALL and WINTER MONTHS.)

GEORGE CHOOS, PRODUCER OF "OH, CHARMED"
PRESENTS

"OH THAT MELODY"

— with —

**Goldie Collins, Jack Henry
and William Pollard**
and a Company of Fifteen People

NAN GREY Scotch Songs

**Mr. and Mrs.
NORMAN PHILLIPS**
In a Rare Comedy Sketch Gem

Scene from "Oh That Melody"

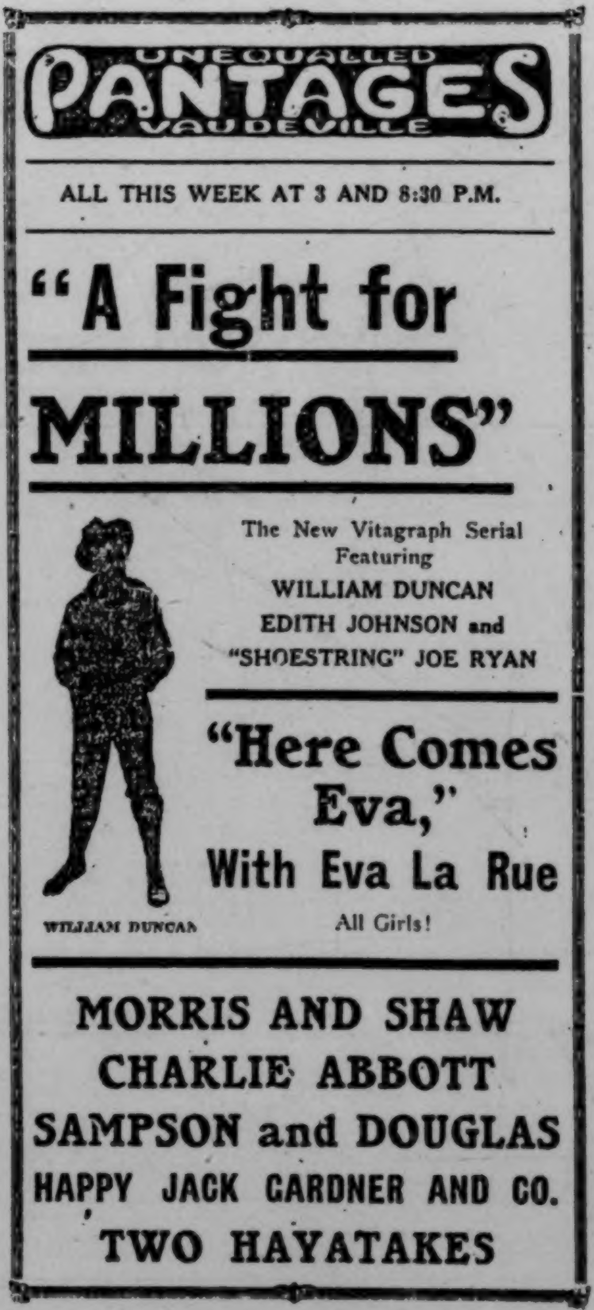
"SWEETS For The SWEET"

KINZO The Royal Jap

—And—
The Nineteenth Episode of
"The HOUSE of HATE"

SWAN and CLIFFORD
Late Stars of
"The Globe Trotters."

Edmonton Bulletin, August 31, 1918.



UNEQUALLED
PANTAGES
VAUDEVILLE

ALL THIS WEEK AT 3 AND 8:30 P.M.

"A Fight for MILLIONS"

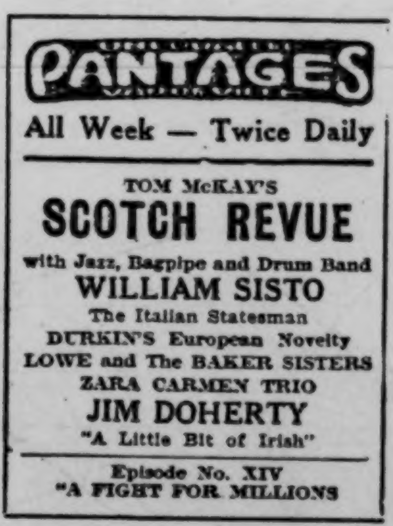
The New Vitagraph Serial
Featuring
WILLIAM DUNCAN
EDITH JOHNSON and
"SHOESTRING" JOE RYAN

"Here Comes Eva,"
With Eva La Rue
All Girls!

WILLIAM DUNCAN

MORRIS AND SHAW
CHARLIE ABBOTT
SAMPSON and DOUGLAS
HAPPY JACK GARDNER AND CO.
TWO HAYATAKES

Edmonton Bulletin, September 17, 1918.



PANTAGES

All Week — Twice Daily

TOM McKAY'S

SCOTCH REVUE

with Jazz, Bagpipe and Drum Band

WILLIAM SISTO

The Italian Statesman

DURKIN'S European Novelty

LOWE and The BAKER SISTERS

ZARA CARMEN TRIO

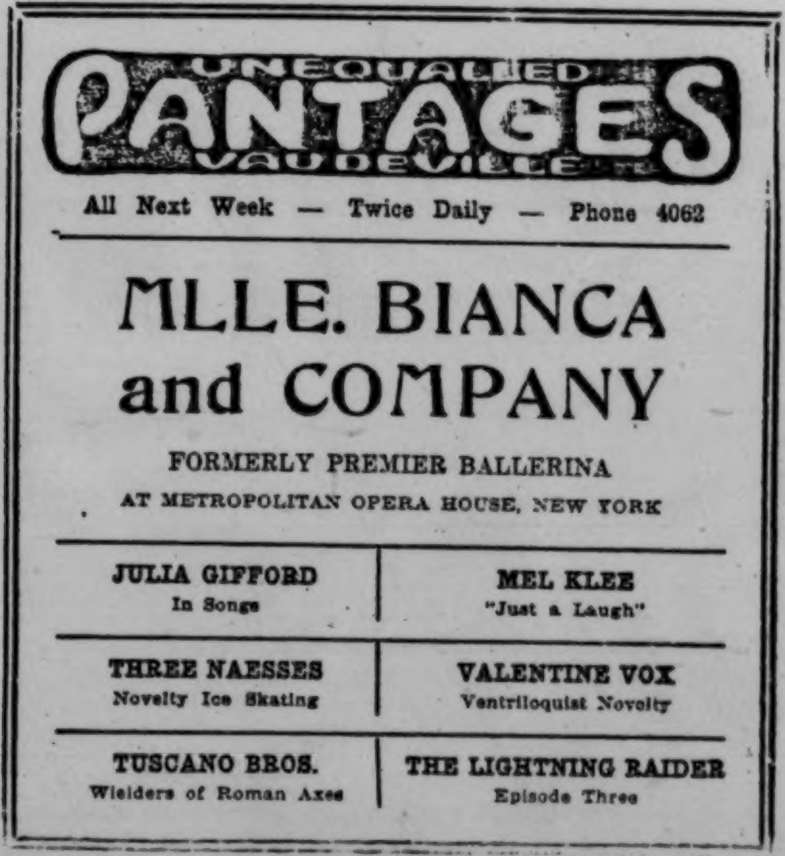
JIM DOHERTY

"A Little Bit of Irish"

Episode No. XIV

"A FIGHT FOR MILLIONS

Edmonton Bulletin, January 28, 1919.



UNEQUALLED

PANTAGES

VAUDEVILLE

All Next Week — Twice Daily — Phone 4062

MLLE. BIANCA
and COMPANY

FORMERLY PREMIER BALLERINA

AT METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE, NEW YORK

JULIA GIFFORD
In Songs

MEL KLEE
"Just a Laugh"

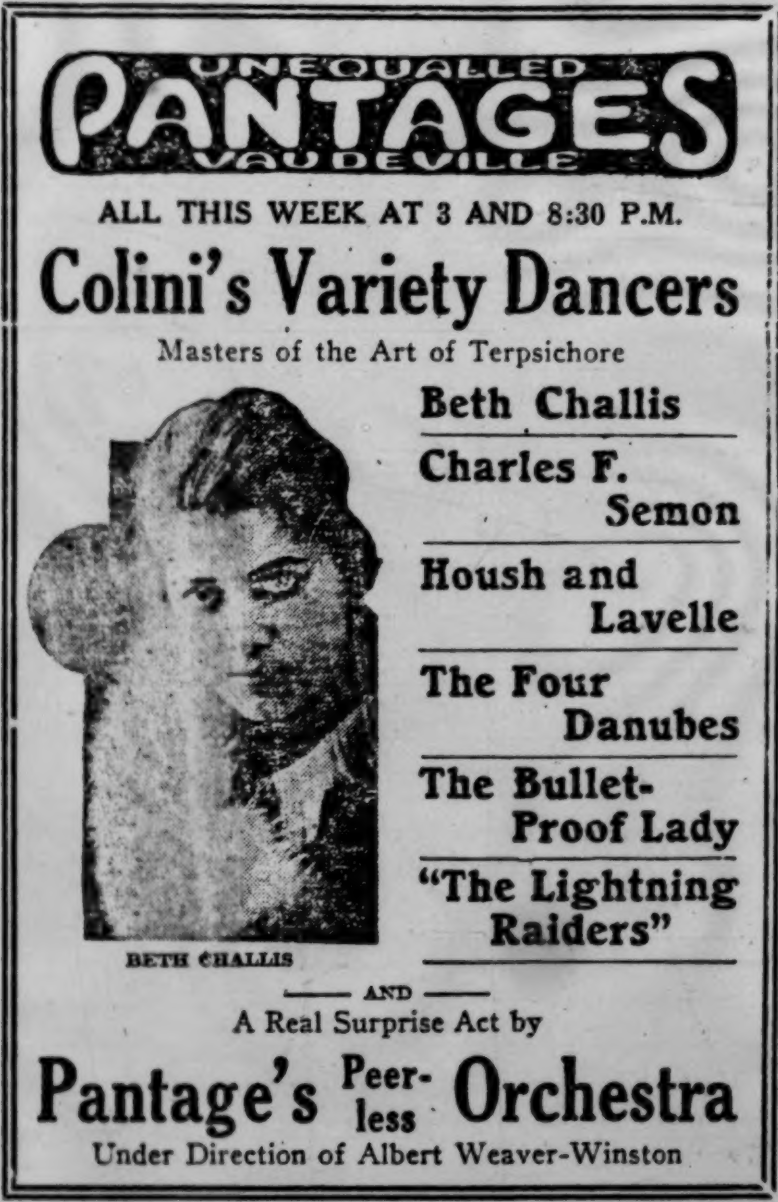
THREE NAESSES
Novelty Ice Skating

VALENTINE VOX
Ventriloquist Novelty

TUSCANO BROS.
Wielders of Roman Axes

THE LIGHTNING RAIDER
Episode Three

Edmonton Bulletin, February 22, 1919.



UNEQUALLED

PANTAGES

VAUDEVILLE

ALL THIS WEEK AT 3 AND 8:30 P.M.

Colini's Variety Dancers

Masters of the Art of Terpsichore

BETH CHALLIS

Beth Challis

Charles F. Semon

Housh and Lavelle

The Four Danubes

The Bullet-Proof Lady

"The Lightning Raiders"

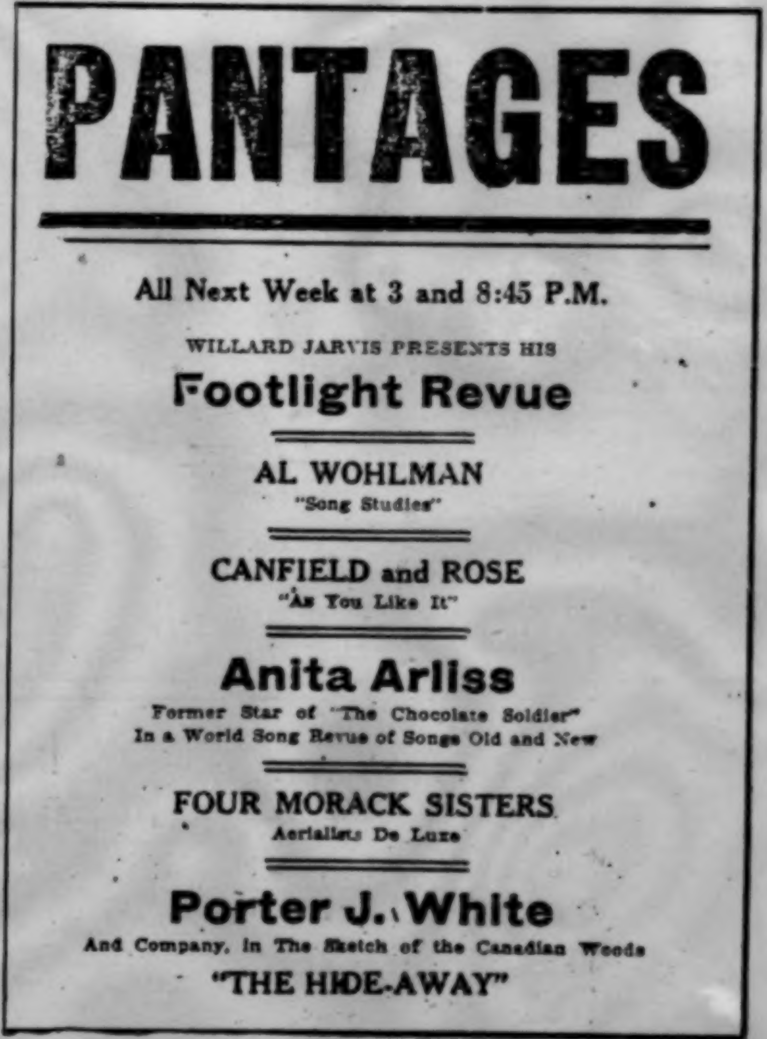
—— AND ——

A Real Surprise Act by

Pantage's Peerless Orchestra

Under Direction of Albert Weaver-Winston

Edmonton Bulletin, May 10, 1919.



PANTAGES

All Next Week at 3 and 8:45 P.M.

WILLARD JARVIS PRESENTS HIS

Footlight Revue

AL WOHLMAN
"Song Studies"

CANFIELD and ROSE
"As You Like It"

Anita Arliss
Former Star of "The Chocolate Soldier"
In a World Song Revue of Songs Old and New

FOUR MORACK SISTERS
Aerialists De Luxe

Porter J. White
And Company, in The Sketch of the Canadian Woods
"THE HIDE-AWAY"

Edmonton Bulletin, July 12, 1919.

PANTAGES

All Next Week at 3 and 8:30 p.m.

‘On The Golf Links’

A Travesty on Pasture Pool
—Set to Music and Decorated with Girls

Ross-Wyse & Co.

With the Famous Australian Midget, Tony

Belle Oliver

"The Cheer-Up Girls"

Helen Shoulder

Cellist

The Cycling Brunettes

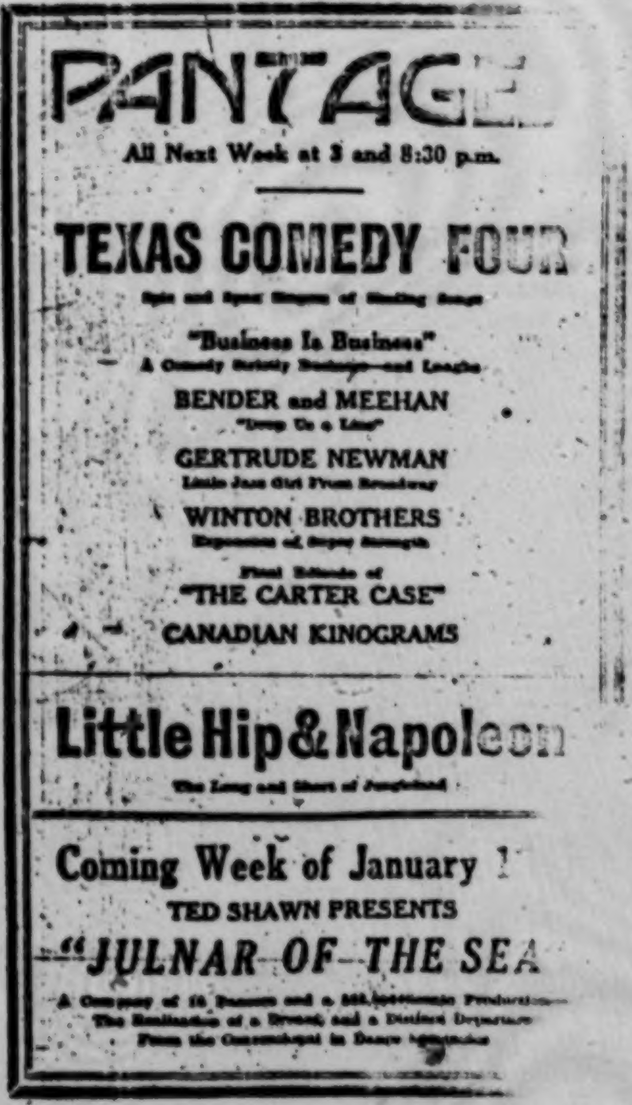
Comedy Cyclists

—AND—

“Number, Please”

A Girl and a Drummer

Edmonton Bulletin, September 13, 1919.



PANTAGE

All Next Week at 3 and 8:30 p.m.

TEXAS COMEDY FOUR

[illegible]

"Business Is Business"
[illegible]

BENDER and MEEHAN
[illegible]

GERTRUDE NEWMAN
Little Jazz Girl From Broadway

WINTON BROTHERS
Exponents of Super Strength

Final Episode of
"THE CARTER CASE"

CANADIAN KINOGRAMS

Little Hip & Napoleon

The Long and Short of Jungleland

Coming Week of January

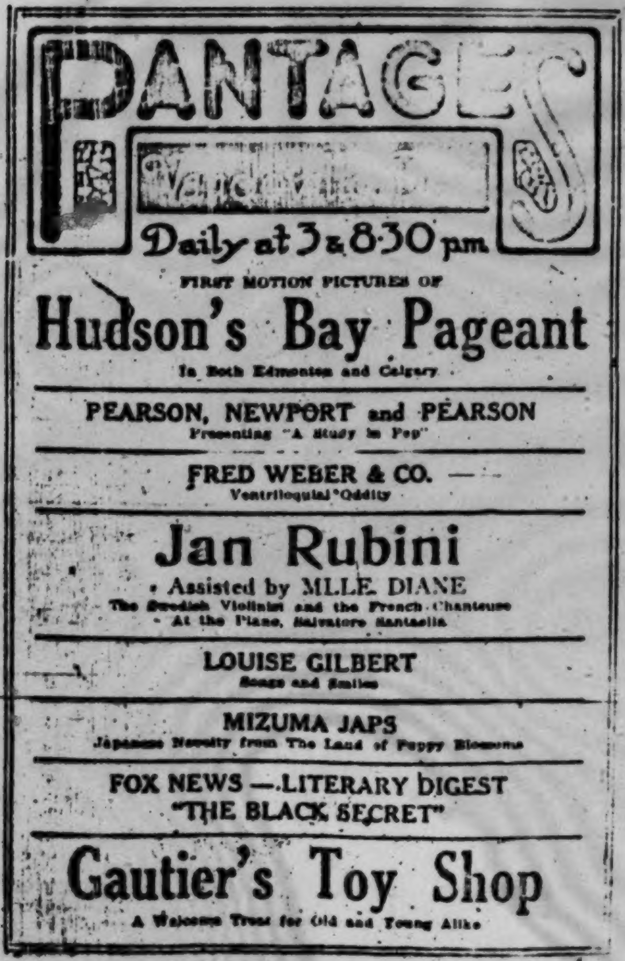
TED SHAWN PRESENTS

"JULNAR OF THE SEA

[illegible]

Edmonton Bulletin, January 3, 1920.

POOR PRINT
Epreuve illisible



PANTAGES

Vaudeville

Daily at 3 & 8.30 pm

FIRST MOTION PICTURES OF

Hudson's Bay Pageant

In Both Edmonton and Calgary

PEARSON, NEWPORT and PEARSON

Presenting "A Study in Pep"

FRED WEBER & CO.

Ventriloquial Oddity

Jan Rubini

Assisted by MLLE. DIANE

The Swedish Violinist and the French Chanteuse

At the Piano, Salvatore Santaella

LOUISE GILBERT

Songs and Smiles

MIZUMA JAPS

Japanese Novelty from The Land of Poppy Blossoms

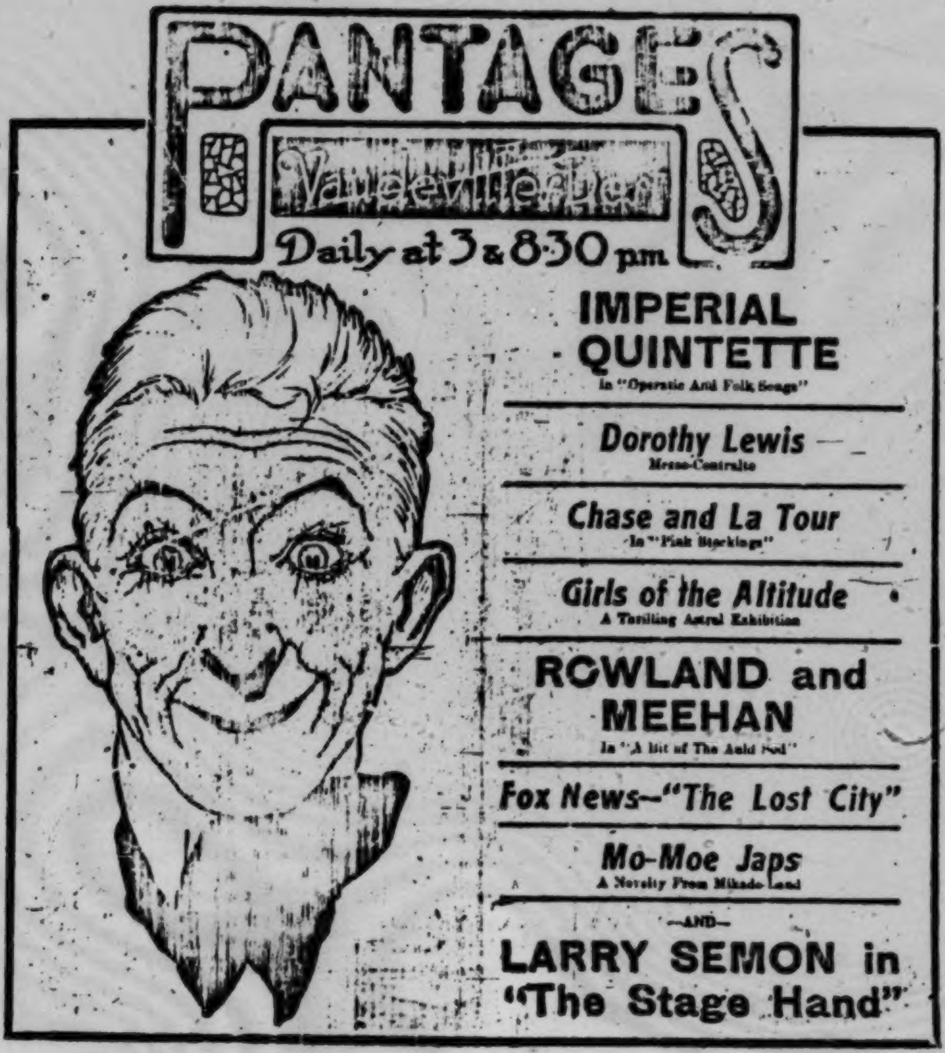
FOX NEWS — LITERARY DIGEST

"THE BLACK SECRET"

Gautier's Toy Shop

A Welcome Treat for Old and Young Alike

Edmonton Bulletin, May 26, 1920.



PANTAGES

Vaudeville [illegible]

Daily at 3 & 8.30 p.m.

IMPERIAL QUINTETTE

In "Operatic And Folk Songs"

Dorothy Lewis

Mezzo-Contralto

Chase and La Tour

In "Pink Stockings"

Girls of the Altitude

A Thrilling Aerial Exhibition

ROWLAND and MEEHAN

In "A Bit of The Auld Sod"

Fox News—"The Lost City"

Mo-Moe Japs

A Novelty From Mikado Land

—AND—

LARRY SEMON in "The Stage Hand"

Edmonton Bulletin, November 13, 1920.

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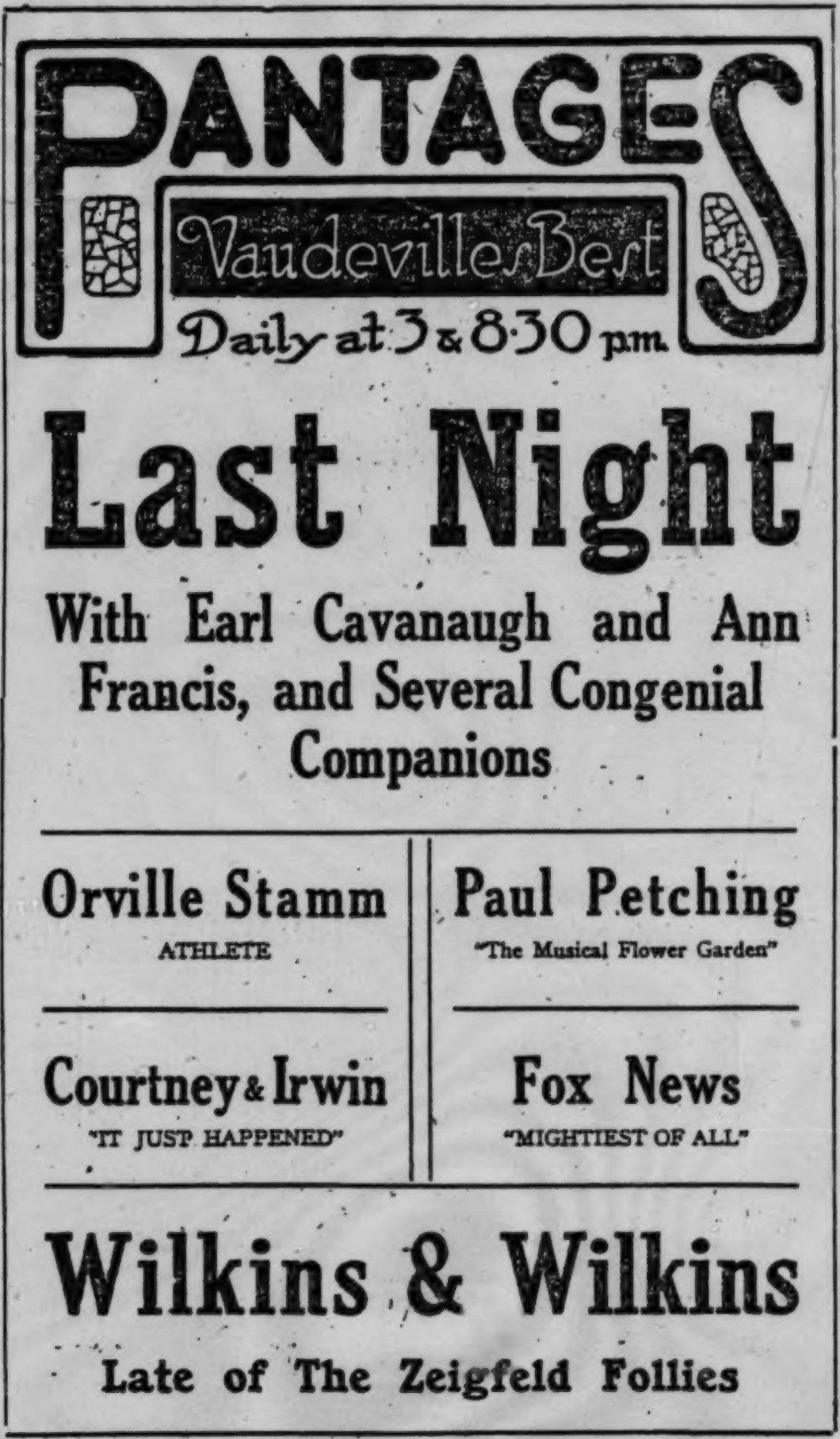
Epreuve illisible



PANTAGES

Vaudevilles Best

Daily at 3 & 8·30 p.m.

Last Night

With Earl Cavanaugh and Ann Francis, and Several Congenial Companions

Orville Stamm

ATHLETE

Paul Petching

"The Musical Flower Garden"

Courtney & Irwin

"IT JUST HAPPENED"

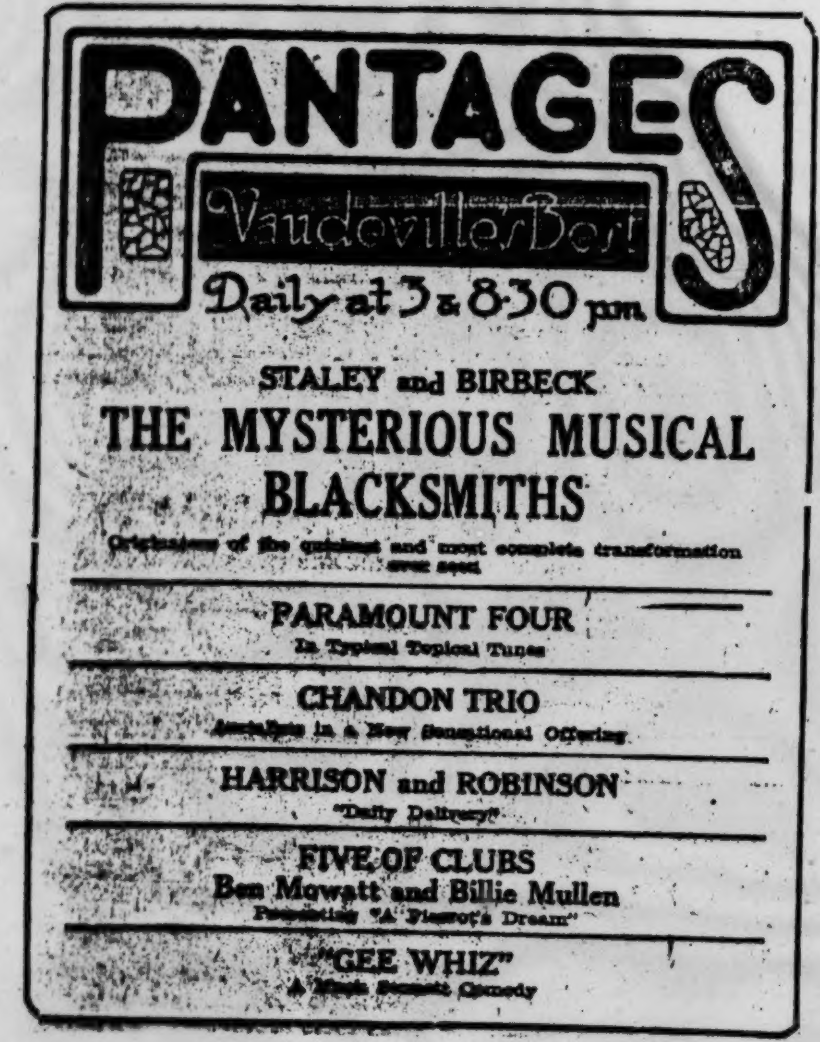
Fox News

"MIGHTIEST OF ALL"

Wilkins & Wilkins

Late of The Zeigfeld Follies

Edmonton Bulletin, January 10, 1921.



PANTAGES

Vaudeville's Best

Daily at 3 & 8.30 p.m.

STALEY and BIRBECK

THE MYSTERIOUS MUSICAL BLACKSMITHS

Originators of the quickest and most complete transformation ever seen

PARAMOUNT FOUR

In Typical Topical Tunes

CHANDON TRIO

Aerialists in a New Sensational Offering

HARRISON and ROBINSON

"Daily Delivery"

FIVE OF CLUBS

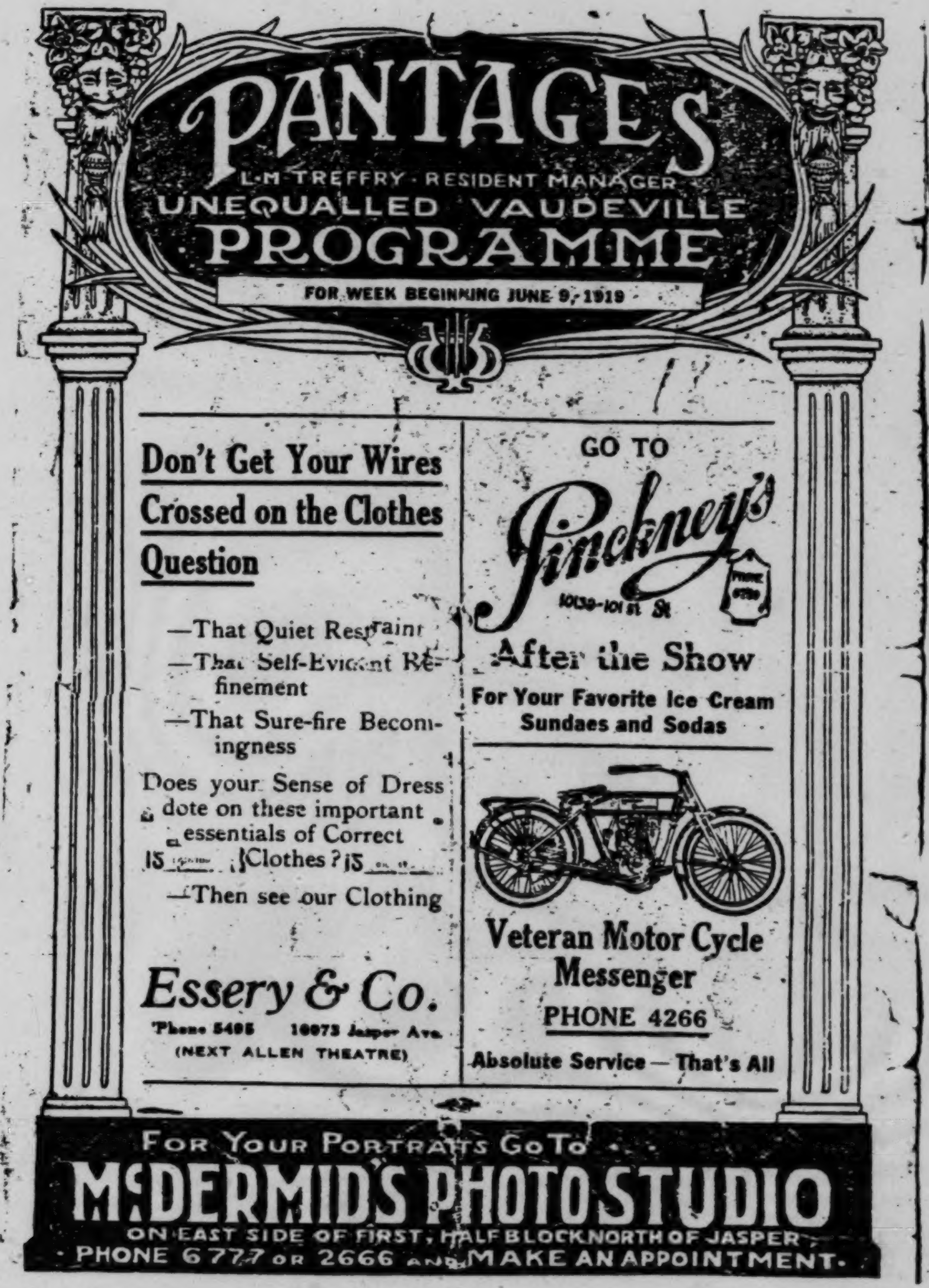
Ben Mowatt and Billie Mullen

Presenting "A Pierrot's Dream"

"GEE WHIZ"

A Mack Sennett Comedy

Edmonton Bulletin, March 31, 1921.



PANTAGES
L-M-TREFFRY · RESIDENT MANAGER
UNEQUALLED VAUDEVILLE
PROGRAMME
FOR WEEK BEGINNING JUNE 9, 1919

Don't Get Your Wires Crossed on the Clothes Question

—That Quiet Restraint
—That Self-Evident Refinement
—That Sure-fire Becomingness

Does your Sense of Dress dote on these important essentials of Correct Clothes?

—Then see our Clothing

Essery & Co.
Phone 5495 10073 Jasper Ave.
(NEXT ALLEN THEATRE)

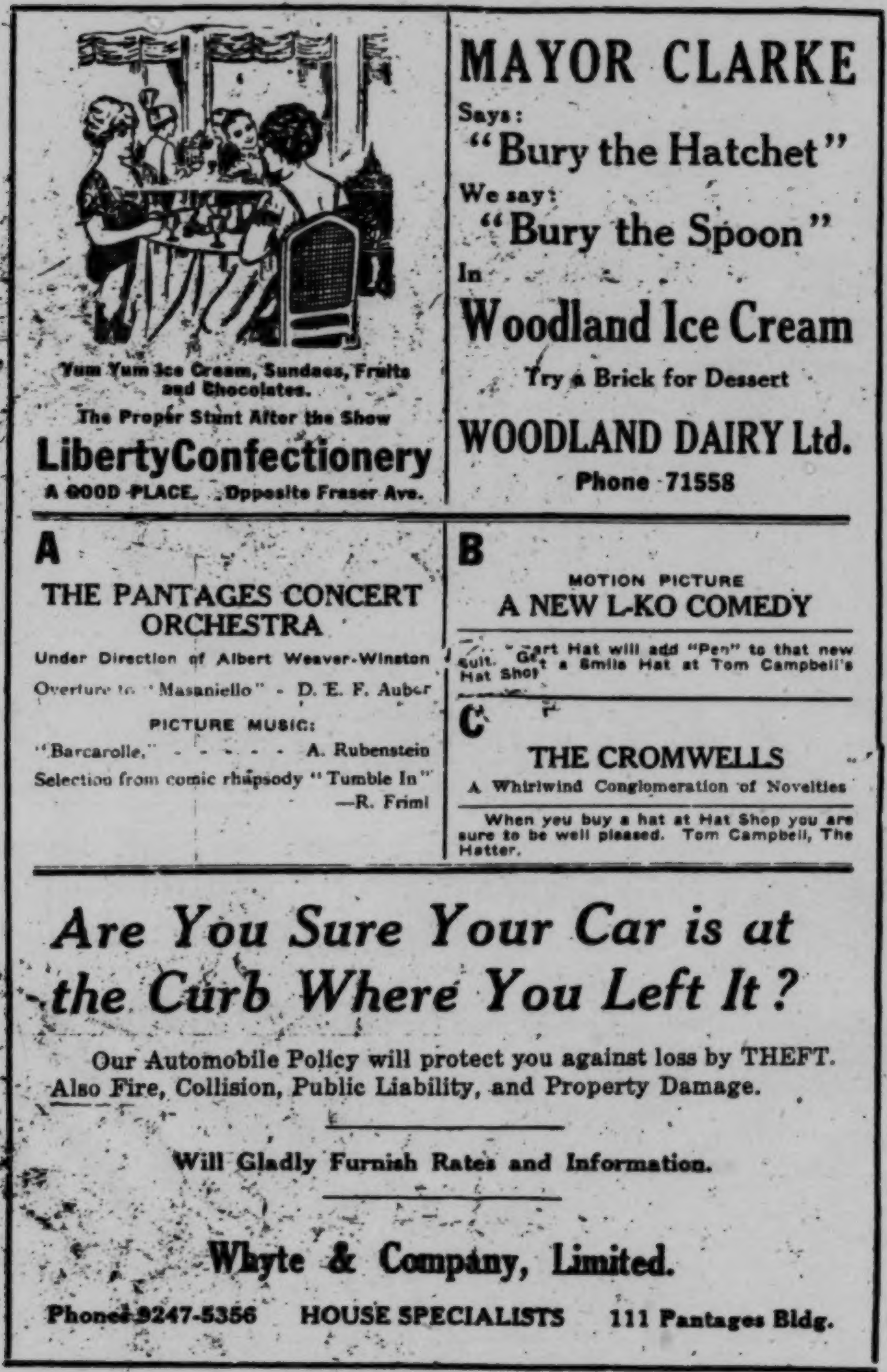
GO TO
Pinckney's
10139-101st St
PHONE [illegible]
After the Show
For Your Favorite Ice Cream Sundaes and Sodas

Veteran Motor Cycle Messenger
PHONE 4266
Absolute Service — That's All

FOR YOUR PORTRAITS GO TO
McDERMID'S PHOTO STUDIO
ON EAST SIDE OF FIRST, HALF BLOCK NORTH OF JASPER
· PHONE 6777 OR 2666 AND MAKE AN APPOINTMENT ·

Edmonton Pantages Theatre Programme for Week Beginning June 9, 1919.

POOR PRINT
Epreuve illisible



Yum Yum Ice Cream, Sundaes, Fruits and Chocolates.

The Proper Stunt After the Show

LibertyConfectionery

A GOOD PLACE. Opposite Fraser Ave.

MAYOR CLARKE

Says:

"Bury the Hatchet"

We say:

"Bury the Spoon"

In

Woodland Ice Cream

Try a Brick for Dessert

WOODLAND DAIRY Ltd.

Phone 71558

A

THE PANTAGES CONCERT ORCHESTRA

Under Direction of Albert Weaver-Winston

Overture to "Masaniello" - D. E. F. Auber

PICTURE MUSIC:

"Barcarolle," - - - - - - A. Rubenstein

Selection from comic rhapsody "Tumble In" —R. Friml

B

MOTION PICTURE

A NEW L-KO COMEDY

Smart Hat will add "Pep" to that new suit. Get a Smile Hat at Tom Campbell's Hat Shop

C

THE CROMWELLS

A Whirlwind Conglomeration of Novelties

When you buy a hat at Hat Shop you are sure to be well pleased. Tom Campbell, The Hatter.

Are You Sure Your Car is at the Curb Where You Left It?

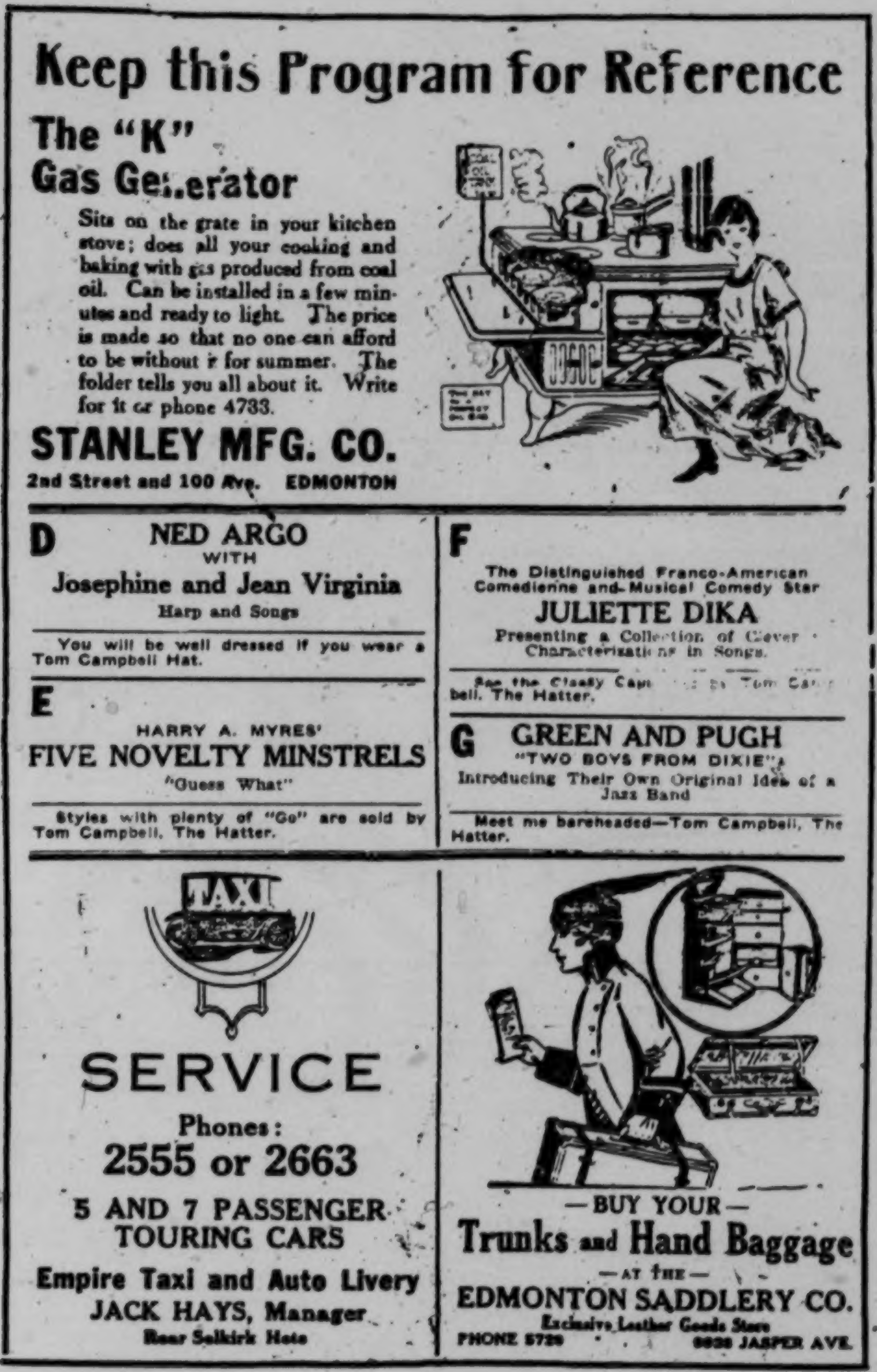
Our Automobile Policy will protect you against loss by THEFT. Also Fire, Collision, Public Liability, and Property Damage.

Will Gladly Furnish Rates and Information.

Whyte & Company, Limited.

Phones 9247-5356 HOUSE SPECIALISTS 111 Pantages Bldg.

Pantages Theatre Programme, p. 2.



Keep this Program for Reference

The "K" Gas Generator

Sits on the grate in your kitchen stove; does all your cooking and baking with gas produced from coal oil. Can be installed in a few minutes and ready to light. The price is made so that no one can afford to be without it for summer. The folder tells you all about it. Write for it or phone 4733.

STANLEY MFG. CO.

2nd Street and 100 Ave. EDMONTON

D

NED ARGO
WITH
Josephine and Jean Virginia
Harp and Songs

You will be well dressed if you wear a Tom Campbell Hat.

E

HARRY A. MYRES'
FIVE NOVELTY MINSTRELS
"Guess What"

Styles with plenty of "Go" are sold by Tom Campbell, The Hatter.

F

The Distinguished Franco-American Comedienne and Musical Comedy Star
JULIETTE DIKA
Presenting a Collection of Clever Characterizations in Songs.

See the Classy Caps [illegible] by Tom Campbell. The Hatter.

G

GREEN AND PUGH
"TWO BOYS FROM DIXIE"
Introducing Their Own Original Idea of a Jazz Band

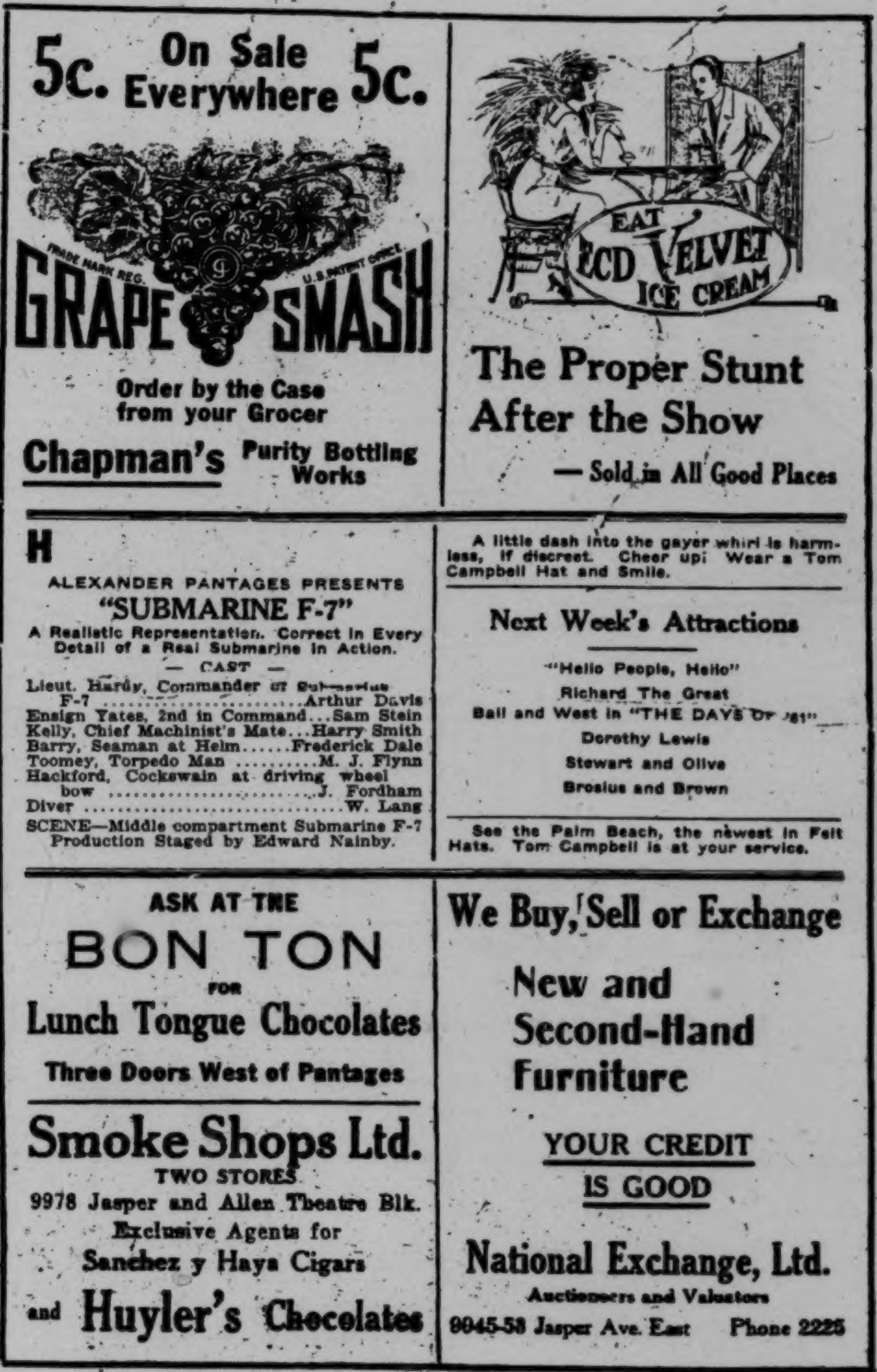
Meet me bareheaded—Tom Campbell, The Hatter.

SERVICE

Phones:
2555 or 2663
5 AND 7 PASSENGER TOURING CARS
Empire Taxi and Auto Livery
JACK HAYS, Manager
Rear Selkirk Hote

—BUY YOUR—
Trunks and Hand Baggage
—AT THE—
EDMONTON SADDLERY CO.
Exclusive Leather Goods Store
PHONE 5729 9928 JASPER AVE.

Pantages Theatre Programme, p. 3.



5c. On Sale Everywhere 5c.

TRADE MARK REG.
U.S. PATENT OFFICE

GRAPE SMASH

Order by the Case
from your Grocer

Chapman's Purity Bottling Works

EAT
RED VELVET
ICE CREAM

The Proper Stunt After the Show

— Sold in All Good Places

H

ALEXANDER PANTAGES PRESENTS

"SUBMARINE F-7"

A Realistic Representation. Correct in Every Detail of a Real Submarine in Action.

— CAST —

Lieut. Hardy, Commander of Submarine F-7	Arthur Davis
Ensign Yates, 2nd in Command	Sam Stein
Kelly, Chief Machinist's Mate	Harry Smith
Barry, Seaman at Helm	Frederick Dale
Toomey, Torpedo Man	M. J. Flynn
Hackford, Cockswain at driving wheel bow	J. Fordham
Diver	W. Lang

SCENE—Middle compartment Submarine F-7
Production Staged by Edward Nainby.

A little dash into the gayer whirl is harmless, if discreet. Cheer up! Wear a Tom Campbell Hat and Smile.

Next Week's Attractions

"Hello People, Hello"
Richard The Great
Ball and West in "THE DAYS OF '61"
Dorothy Lewis
Stewart and Olive
Brosius and Brown

See the Palm Beach, the newest in Felt Hats. Tom Campbell is at your service.

ASK AT THE
BON TON
FOR
Lunch Tongue Chocolates
Three Doors West of Pantages

Smoke Shops Ltd.
TWO STORES
9978 Jasper and Allen Theatre Blk.
Exclusive Agents for
Sanchez y Haya Cigars
and **Huyler's Chocolates**

We Buy, Sell or Exchange

New and Second-Hand Furniture

YOUR CREDIT
IS GOOD

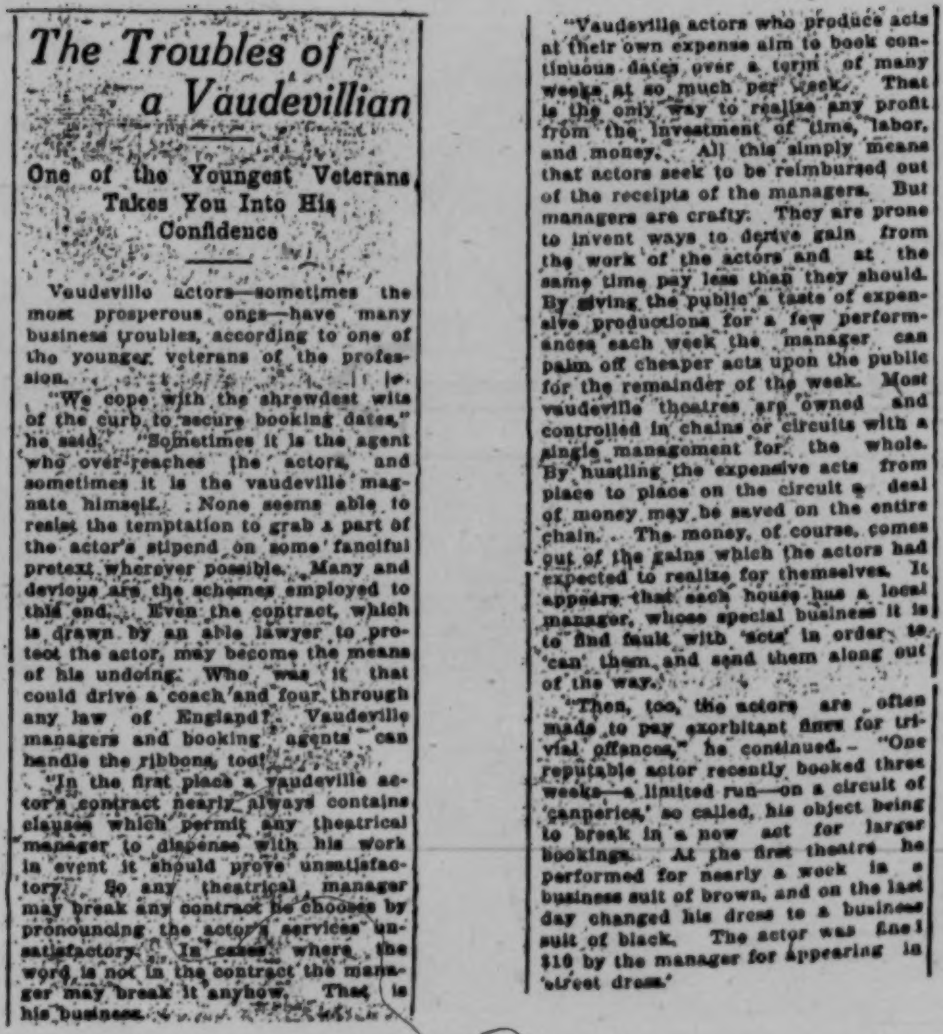
National Exchange, Ltd.
Auctioneers and Valuators
9945-58 Jasper Ave. East Phone 2225

Pantages Theatre Programme, p. 4.

APPENDIX C.

"THE TROUBLES OF A VAUDEVILLIAN".

EDMONTON BULLETIN, FEBRUARY 21, 1914.



The Troubles of a Vaudevillian

One of the Youngest Veterans Takes You Into His Confidence

Vaudeville actors—sometimes the most prosperous ones—have many business troubles, according to one of the younger veterans of the profession.

"We cope with the shrewdest wits of the curb to secure booking dates," he said. "Sometimes it is the agent who over-reaches the actors, and sometimes it is the vaudeville magnate himself. None seems able to resist the temptation to grab a part of the actor's stipend on some fanciful pretext wherever possible. Many and devious are the schemes employed to this end. Even the contract, which is drawn by an able lawyer to protect the actor, may become the means of his undoing. Who was it that could drive a coach and four through any law of England? Vaudeville managers and booking agents can handle the ribbons, too!

"In the first place a vaudeville actor's contract nearly always contains clauses which permit any theatrical manager to dispense with his work in event it should prove unsatisfactory. So any theatrical manager may break any contract he chooses by pronouncing the actor's services unsatisfactory. In cases where the word is not in the contract the manager may break it anyhow. That is his business.

"Vaudeville actors who produce acts at their own expense aim to book continuous dates over a term of many weeks at so much per week. That is the only way to realize any profit from the investment of time, labor, and money." All this simply means that actors seek to be reimbursed out of the receipts of the managers. But managers are crafty. They are prone to invent ways to derive gain from the work of the actors and at the same time pay less than they should. By giving the public a taste of expensive productions for a few performances each week the manager can palm off cheaper acts upon the public for the remainder of the week. Most vaudeville theatres are owned and controlled in chains or circuits with a single management for the whole. By hustling the expensive acts from place to place on the circuit a deal of money may be saved on the entire chain. The money, of course, comes out of the gains which the actors had expected to realize for themselves. It appears that each house has a local manager, whose special business it is to find fault with 'acts' in order to 'can' them and send them along out of the way.

"Then, too, the actors are often made to pay exorbitant fines for trivial offences," he continued. "One reputable actor recently booked three weeks—a limited run—on a circuit of 'canneries,' so called, his object being to break in a new act for larger bookings. At the first theatre he performed for nearly a week in a business suit of brown, and on the last day changed his dress to a business suit of black. The actor was fined $10 by the manager for appearing in 'street dress.'

Edmonton Bulletin, February 21, 1914.

Author anonymous.

POOR PRINT
Epreuve illisible

APPENDIX D.

PANTAGES THEATRE PLAYBILL ADVERTISEMENTS,
SEPTEMBER 12, 1921 TO JULY 24, 1929.

METROPOLITAN

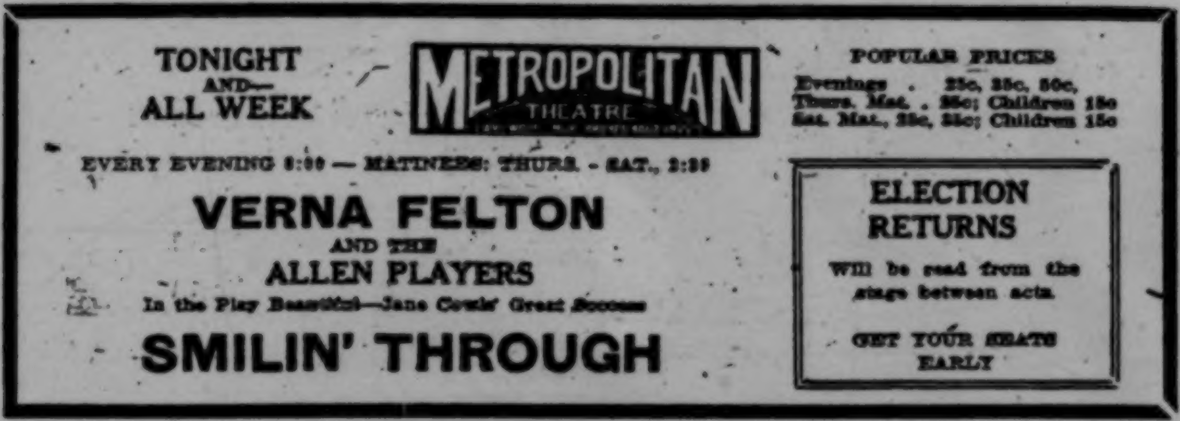
FORMERLY
PANTAGES

GRAND OPENING

TOMORROW NIGHT AT 7 P.M.

SPECIALLY SELECTED PROGRAM OF
MOTION PICTURES

Edmonton Bulletin, September 12, 1921.



TONIGHT
AND—
ALL WEEK

METROPOLITAN
THEATRE

POPULAR PRICES
Evenings . 25c, 35c, 50c,
Thurs. Mat. . 25c; Children 15c
Sat. Mat., 25c, 35c; Children 15c

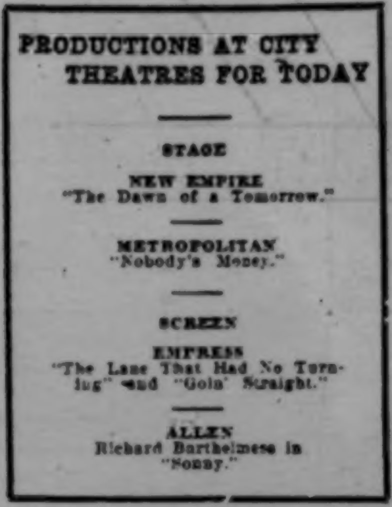
EVERY EVENING 8:30 — MATINEES: THURS. - SAT., 2:30

VERNA FELTON
AND THE
ALLEN PLAYERS
In the Play Beautiful—Jane Cowl's Great Success
SMILIN' THROUGH

ELECTION RETURNS
Will be read from the stage between acts.

GET YOUR SEATS EARLY

Edmonton Bulletin, December 12, 1921.



PRODUCTIONS AT CITY THEATRES FOR TODAY

STAGE

NEW EMPIRE
"The Dawn of a Tomorrow."

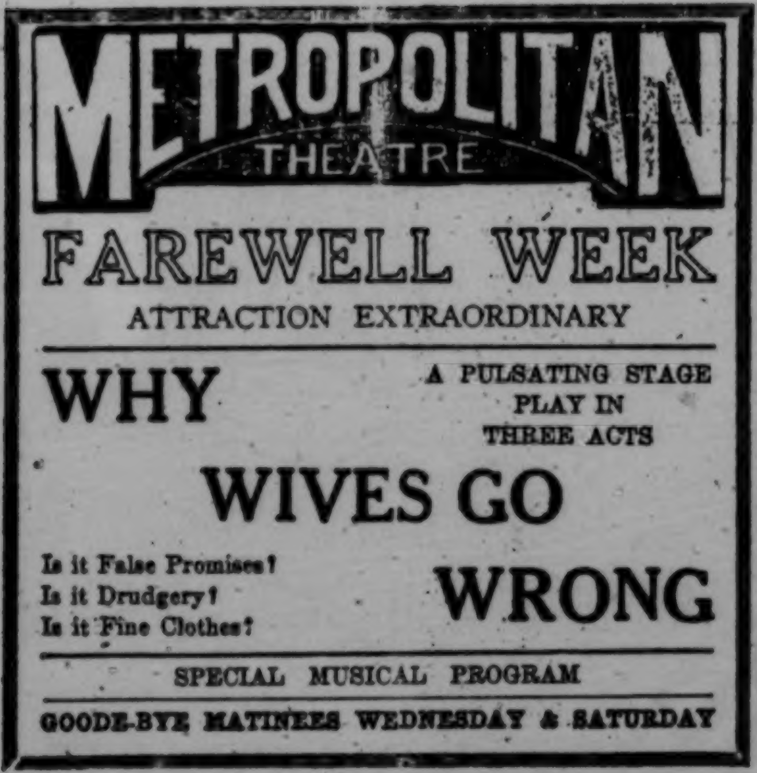
METROPOLITAN
"Nobody's Money."

SCREEN

EMPRESS
"The Lane That Had No Turning" and "Goin' Straight."

ALLEN
Richard Barthelmess in "Sonny."

Edmonton Bulletin, August 7, 1922.



METROPOLITAN
THEATRE

FAREWELL WEEK

ATTRACTION EXTRAORDINARY

WHY WIVES GO WRONG

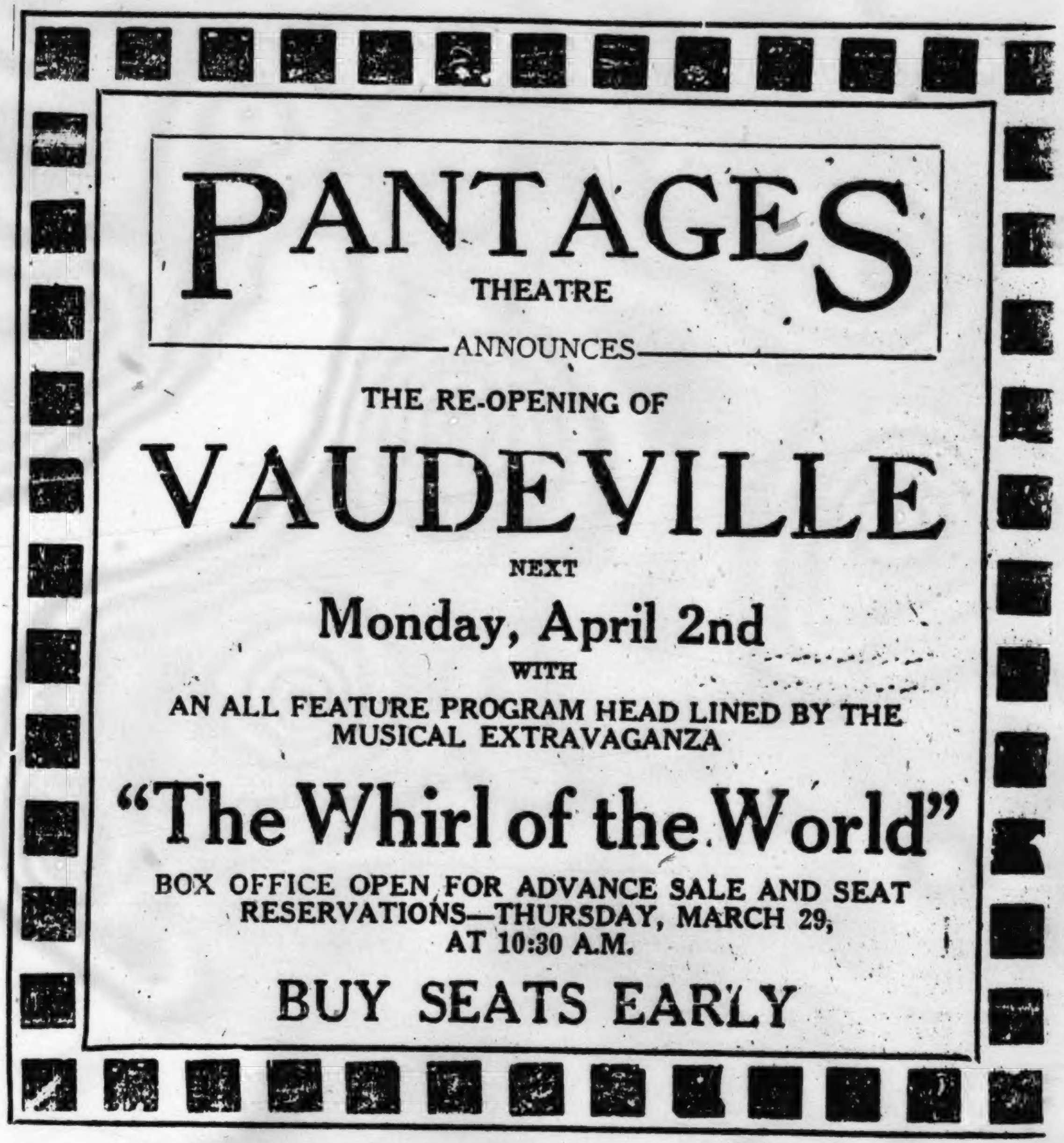
A PULSATING STAGE PLAY IN THREE ACTS

Is it False Promises?
Is it Drudgery?
Is it Fine Clothes?

SPECIAL MUSICAL PROGRAM

GOODE-BYE MATINEES WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY

Edmonton Bulletin, May 10, 1923.



PANTAGES
THEATRE

ANNOUNCES

THE RE-OPENING OF

VAUDEVILLE

NEXT

Monday, April 2nd

WITH

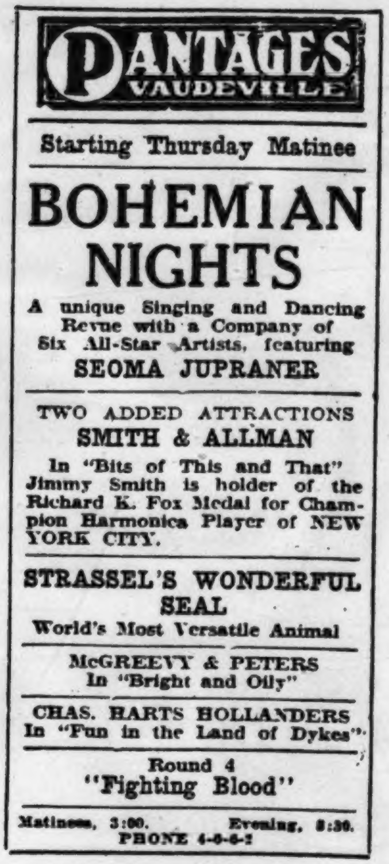
AN ALL FEATURE PROGRAM HEAD LINED BY THE MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA

"The Whirl of the World"

BOX OFFICE OPEN FOR ADVANCE SALE AND SEAT RESERVATIONS—THURSDAY, MARCH 29, AT 10:30 A.M.

BUY SEATS EARLY

Edmonton Bulletin, March 29, 1923.



PANTAGES
VAUDEVILLE

Starting Thursday Matinee

BOHEMIAN NIGHTS

A unique Singing and Dancing Revue with a Company of Six All-Star Artists, featuring
SEOMA JUPRANER

TWO ADDED ATTRACTIONS
SMITH & ALLMAN
In "Bits of This and That" Jimmy Smith is holder of the Richard K. Fox Medal for Champion Harmonica Player of NEW YORK CITY.

STRASSEL'S WONDERFUL SEAL
World's Most Versatile Animal

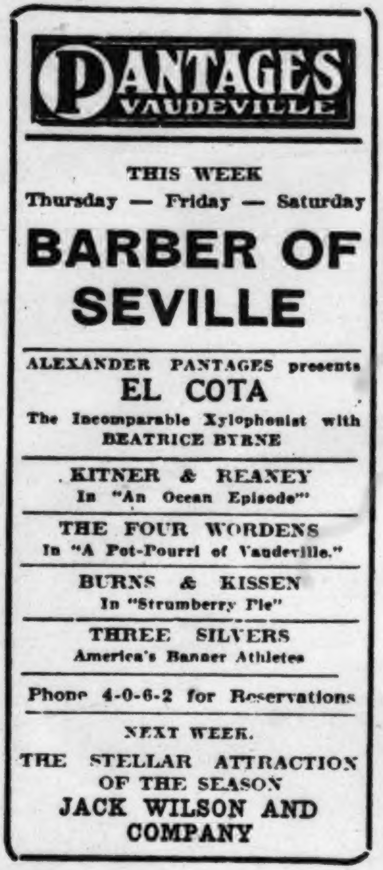
McGREEVY & PETERS
In "Bright and Oily"

CHAS. HARTS HOLLANDERS
In "Fun in the Land of Dykes"

Round 4
"Fighting Blood"

Matinees, 3:00. Evening, 8:30.
PHONE 4-0-6-2

Edmonton Bulletin, July 3, 1924.



PANTAGES
VAUDEVILLE

THIS WEEK
Thursday — Friday — Saturday

BARBER OF SEVILLE

ALEXANDER PANTAGES presents
EL COTA
The Incomparable Xylophonist with BEATRICE BYRNE

KITNER & REANEY
In "An Ocean Episode"

THE FOUR WORDENS
In "A Pot-Pourri of Vaudeville."

BURNS & KISSEN
In "Strumberry Pie"

THREE SILVERS
America's Banner Athletes

Phone 4-0-6-2 for Reservations

NEXT WEEK.
THE STELLAR ATTRACTION OF THE SEASON
JACK WILSON AND COMPANY

Edmonton Bulletin, April 1, 1925.

IF IT IS A GOOD LAUGH YOU WANT DON'T MISS

PANTAGES

WHERE EVERYONE GOES

Starting With a Ladies' Two-for-One Matinee Tomorrow
Any Lady Purchasing One Ticket for Thursday Matinee is
Entitled to Bring One Lady as Her Guest FREE

A STRAIGHT VAUDEVILLE BILL, NO FEATURE PICTURES

MATINEE 3:00 — EVENING 8:45

CARL FRANCIS & CO.

IN

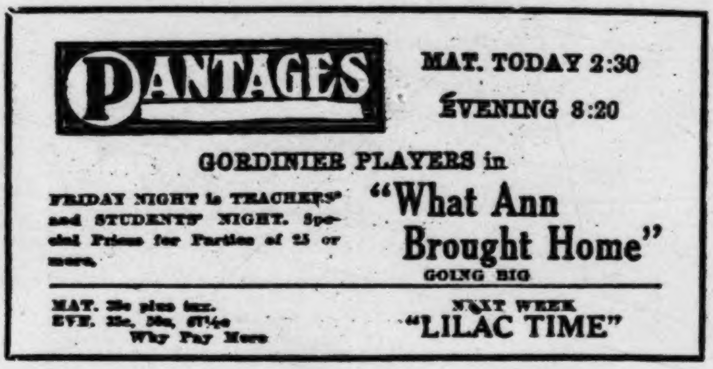
"BROADWAY FLASHES"

LINDSAY & MASON, CARLSON SISTERS,
MARGARET DALY AND OTHERS

Pat—BARRETT & CUNNEEN—Nora
"LOOKING FOR FUN"

Other Big Acts and Short Pictures. Al Preston's Pantages Orchestra.

Edmonton Bulletin, May 5, 1926.



PANTAGES

MAT. TODAY 2:30
EVENING 8:20

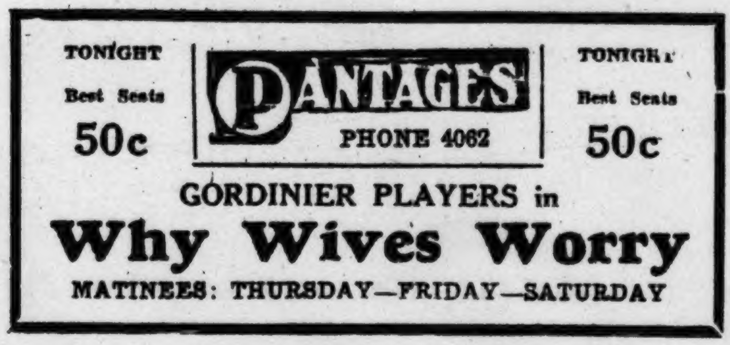
GORDINIER PLAYERS in
"What Ann Brought Home"
GOING BIG

FRIDAY NIGHT is TEACHERS' and STUDENTS' NIGHT. Special Prices for Parties of 25 or more.

MAT. 25c plus tax.
EVE. 25c, 50c, 67½c
Why Pay More

NEXT WEEK
"LILAC TIME"

Edmonton Bulletin, January 2, 1928.



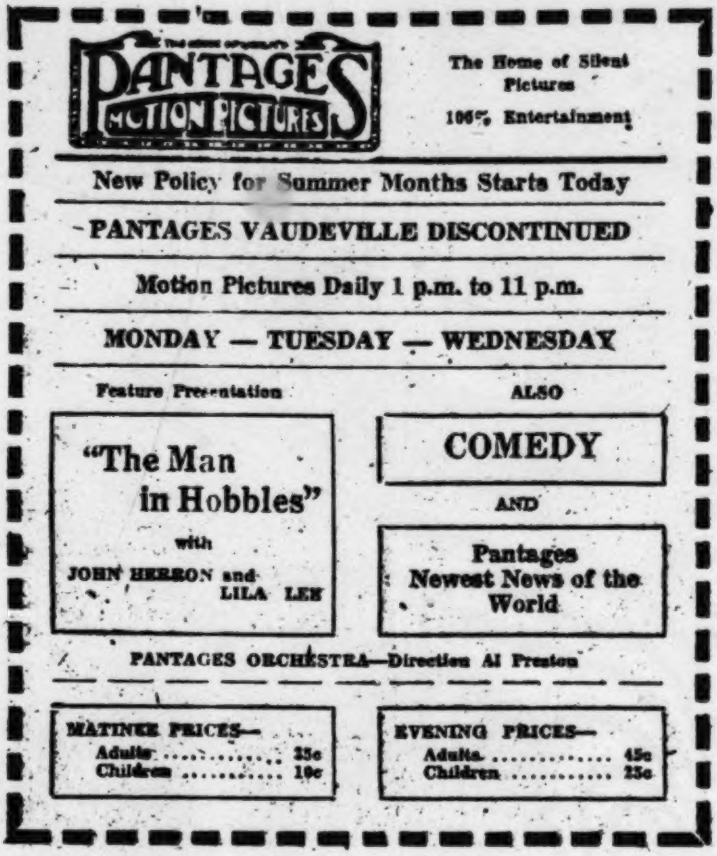
TONIGHT
Best Seats
50c

PANTAGES
PHONE 4062

TONIGHT
Best Seats
50c

GORDINIER PLAYERS in
Why Wives Worry
MATINEES: THURSDAY—FRIDAY—SATURDAY

Edmonton Bulletin, April 12, 1928.



PANTAGES MOTION PICTURES

The Home of Silent Pictures

100% Entertainment

New Policy for Summer Months Starts Today

PANTAGES VAUDEVILLE DISCONTINUED

Motion Pictures Daily 1 p.m. to 11 p.m.

MONDAY — TUESDAY — WEDNESDAY

Feature Presentation

"The Man in Hobbles"

with

JOHN HERRON and LILA LEE

ALSO

COMEDY

AND

Pantages Newest News of the World

PANTAGES ORCHESTRA—Direction Al Preston

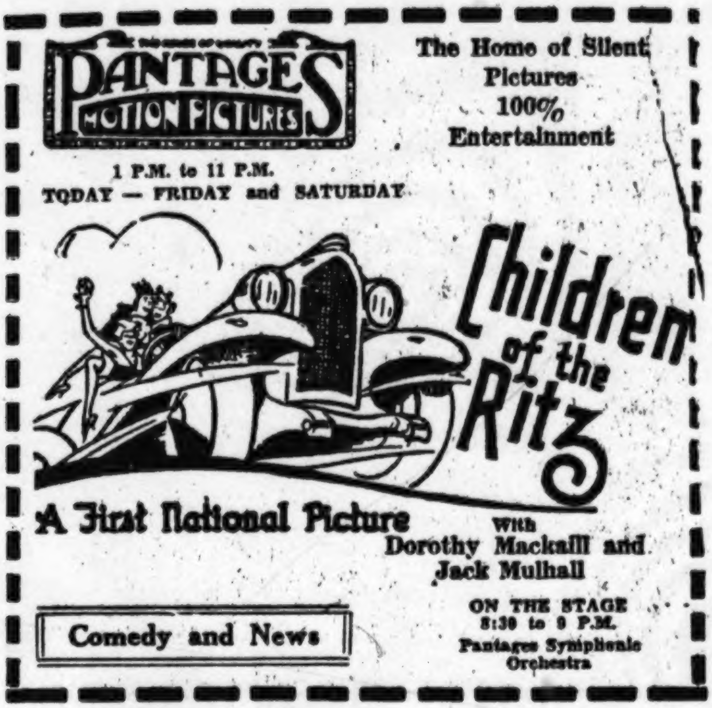
MATINEE PRICES—

Adults	25c
Children	10c

EVENING PRICES—

Adults	45c
Children	25c

Edmonton Bulletin, July 22, 1929.



PANTAGES
MOTION PICTURES

The Home of Silent
Pictures
100%
Entertainment

1 P.M. to 11 P.M.
TODAY — FRIDAY and SATURDAY

Children of the Ritz

A First National Picture

With
Dorothy Mackaill and
Jack Mulhall

Comedy and News

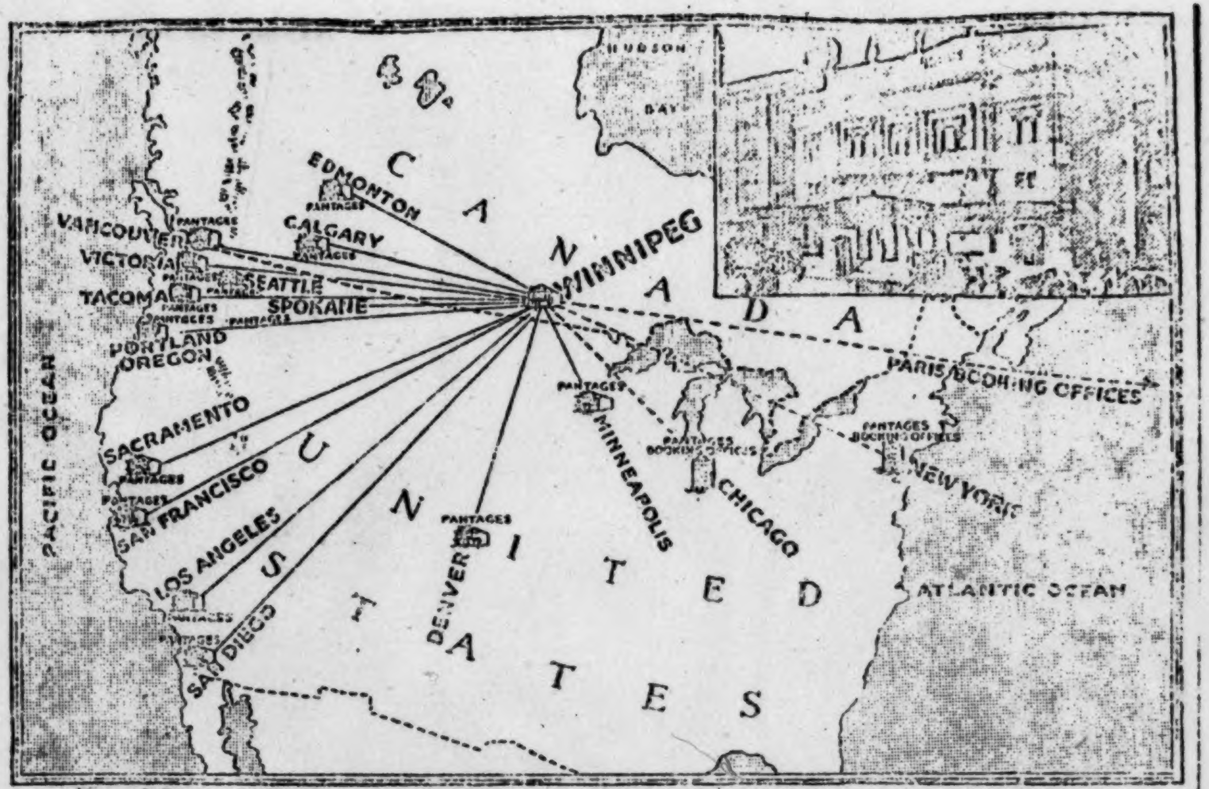
ON THE STAGE
8:30 to 9 P.M.
Pantages Symphonic
Orchestra

Edmonton Bulletin, July 24, 1929.

APPENDIX E.

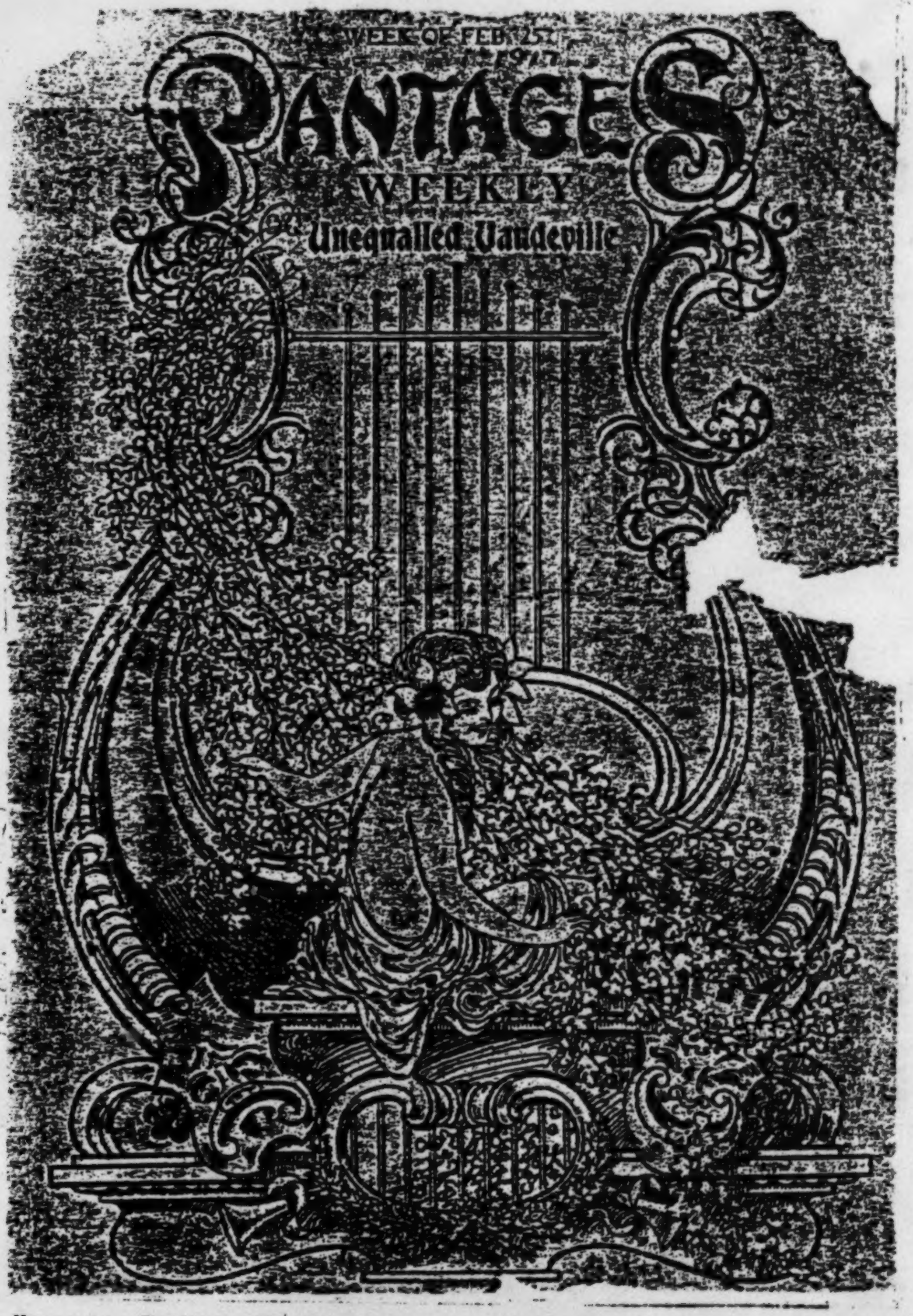
MAP OF PANTAGES CIRCUIT, WINNIPEG FREE PRESS, 1914,
VANCOUVER PANTAGES THEATRE PROGRAM, FEBRUARY 25, 1917,
p. 1, AND VANCOUVER PANTAGES THEATRE PROGRAM EXCERPT,
JULY 24, 1915.

POOR PRINT
Epreuve illisible


HUDSON BAY
CANADA
WINNIPEG
EDMONTON
PANTAGES
CALGARY
VANCOUVER
VICTORIA
SEATTLE
TACOMA
SPOKANE
PORTLAND OREGON
SACRAMENTO
SAN FRANCISCO
LOS ANGELES
SAN DIEGO
DENVER
MINNEAPOLIS
CHICAGO
PANTAGES BOOKING OFFICES
NEW YORK
PARIS BOOKING OFFICES
UNITED STATES
PACIFIC OCEAN
ATLANTIC OCEAN

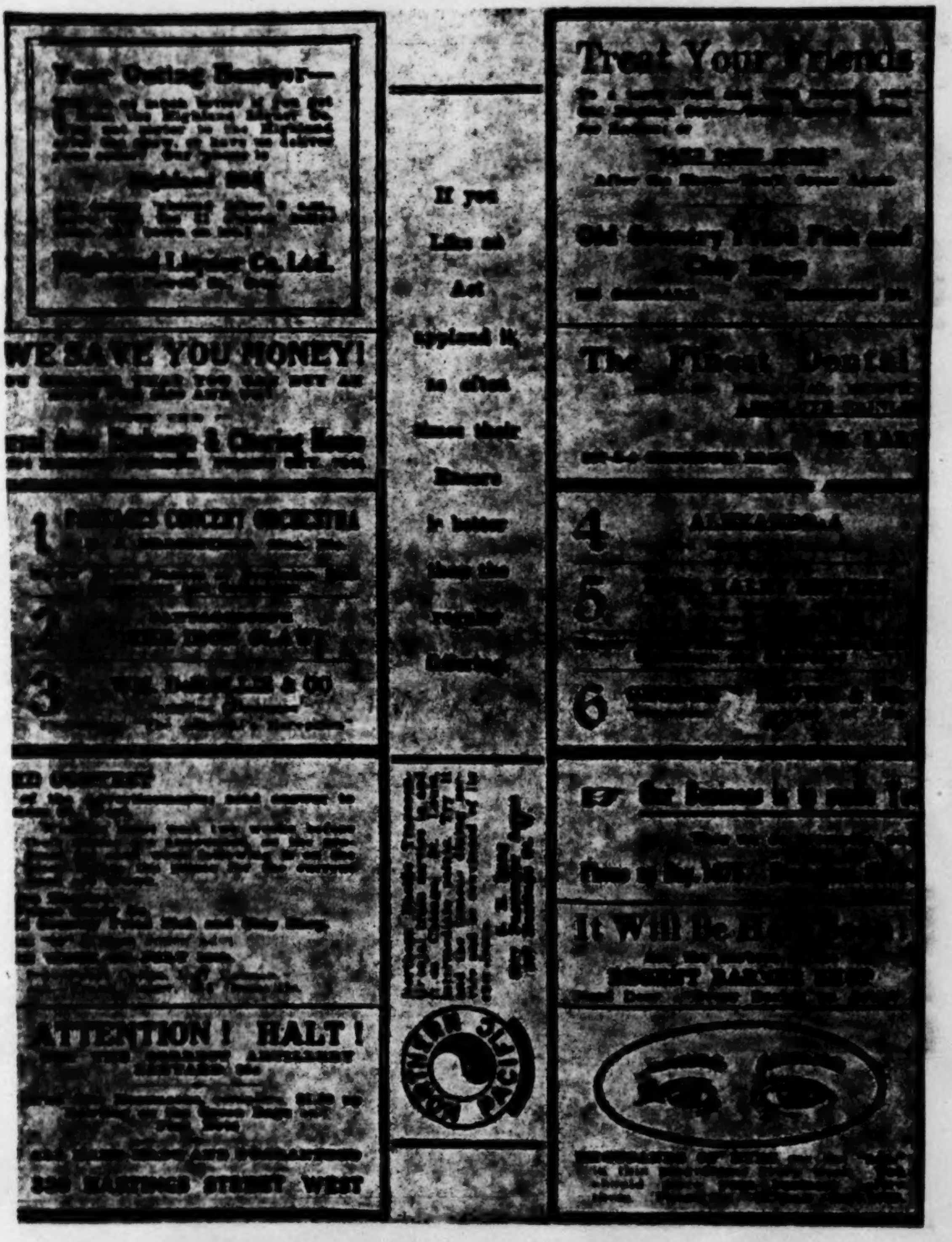
Map of Pantages Circuit as it will appear after February 9. Inset is view of new Winnipeg house.

Winnipeg Free Press, February 9, 1914.


WEEK OF FEB 25
1917
PANTAGES
WEEKLY
Unequalled Vaudeville

Vancouver Pantages Theatre Programme, February 25, 1917,
Vancouver City Archives.

POOR PRINT
Epreuve illisible



Your Outing Hamper—

Liquor Co. Ltd.

WE SAVE YOU MONEY!

1

2

3

If you Like an Act applaud it, as often times their Encore is better than the regular offering.

ATTENTION! HALT!

HASTINGS STREET WEST

Treat Your Friends

The Finest Dental

4

5

6

It Will Be

Vancouver Pantages Theatre Programme Excerpt, July 24, 1915, Vancouver City Archives.

POOR PRINT
Epreuve illisible